

Ken

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RECORD REVIEWS

INTRODUCTION

ALERT READERS may have noticed that the average length of our record reviews has been reduced by 25% over the past two or three months. This is a measure made necessary by the apparently unending flood of jazz/blues releases, but its ultimate impact on our space problems cannot be measured for a few months yet. For years we have proclaimed that the deluge of issues must decline, and for just as many years our prognostications have been proved incorrect. This magazine has never been particularly concerned with reviewing LPs at great speed, but in the past months the size of the backlog has been growing ominously. I have considered various alternatives for dealing with the situation, including having an 'also ran' section of brief notices on the less important releases, curtailing the personnel information, and having a couple of issues devoted to nothing but record reviews. Ultimately I rejected all these ideas, because a) I dislike the idea of a string of short reviews that can say little that would be useful to prospective purchasers or fair to the performers, b) Having a great interest in discographical matters I have always taken some pride in the fact that our reviews give the fullest information in this field of any jazz magazine with a reasonably comprehensive review policy, and c) There must be readers who would legitimately balk at an issue containing nothing but record reviews. From letters received I know that many readers buy the magazine partly on the strength of its record reviews, my own belief being that regular readers who do not have listening access to more than a fraction of the current output tend to find a reviewer whose tastes coincide in the main with their own and use his notices as a rough guide.



THE FIRST records on the C.B.S. label were issued in May 1962. The company is owned by American Columbia, whose masters had been locally available in previous years through the E.M.I., later Philips, organisations; The name Columbia is a registered trademark of E.M.I. in this country — that is why import sets on U.S. Columbia have to have the C.B.S. labels pasted over them — but as the American company is owned by the Columbia Broadcasting System the C.B.S. title is logical.

C.B.S. have been chided in these columns in the past for what seemed a stop-go policy in relationship to jazz issues, but in the past few months they have released many interesting jazz and blues items. From the U.S. parent company they have drawn material by such contracted artists as Dave Brubeck, Miles Davis and Thelonious Monk, and will continue to do so in the future. Many of the American Columbia reissue albums are now appearing as import items — some will be reviewed next month when we deal with the E.M.I. Import Division — and it seems that most of the

Some of my other reviewers may, of course, have a more exalted view of their function! Finally, I decided upon a compromise solution as outlined in the next paragraph.

Over the next five or six months, in addition to the normal record review section, one or possibly two companies will be spotlighted in some detail. There will be notes on overall jazz policy, details of future releases of interest when such information is available, but above all a working through of releases that have accumulated or, in a few instances, been inadvertently left out. We start with C.B.S., though this company is somewhat atypical in as far as the backlog is slight. However, we are able to save space by, for example, dealing with the repackaged Realm issues in collective form, while at the same time devoting a feature review to the bold — commercially that is — set of four LPs by contemporary British jazz artists. Next month E.M.I. and E.M.I. Imports will be given feature spots.

The introductory notes will enable us, in passing, to deal with such matters as the increasing percentage of imports in the jazz field, and to discuss just why there are so many jazz records, particularly reissues, appearing at a time when live jazz, notably in the U.S.A., is going through such a lean period. The contents of the magazine for several months will be roughly split 50-50 between record reviews and other material, and at the end of this period we should be as near up to date as is ever possible. Once a company has been featured, and any backlog dealt with, its new releases will be covered on a month to month basis in the normal review section — otherwise at the end of five or six months we should need to start working through the alphabetical sequence of companies once again, and so on ad infinitum.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

Epic reissues will also be locally available in this form. There have been two batches of reissue material on the Epic label over the past years, the first appearing in both mono and 'enhanced for stereo' form. It appears that few of the mono releases were easy to come by in the States and there was collector resistance to the 'enhanced for stereo' pressings, the end result being that the second batch were made available in mono only and the first should also now be obtainable in this form. When the E.M.I. Import Division obtains these records it should be in mono pressings. Frank Driggs, responsible for the compilation of the U.S. Columbia/Epic reissues, has recently stated that the structure of the American record industry is such that it is unlikely that there will be many more releases of this nature in his country. However, British C.B.S. has an arrangement whereby Mr. Driggs will compile reissue LPs for the local market, recent examples being the items by the Don Redman Orchestra, Big Bill Broonzy and Bukka White.

Realm is the local C.B.S. label with the highest proportion of jazz items. In the past couple of months there has been a repackaging and reissuing of eighteen Realm LPs, all but two of which

AN ERROR occurred in the order of Jack Cooke's "Sixteen Men Stone Dead"

article in our last issue. After the paragraph concluding with the words 'would seriously affect his music', page 4, column 1 (near the end) there should follow the paragraph beginning '1950 I think, is the year', about half-way down page 5, column 1. This reads through to the end of the piece as printed, then the concluding parts run from page 4, column 1, with the paragraph starting 'By 1946 big band thinking' and ends with the paragraph on page 5, column 1, with the words 'or, come to that, Ellington, wax museums'. Our apologies to Jack Cooke and our readers for the error.

While in the sackcloth and ashes role, a line from Max Harrison's review of the New Art Jazz Ensemble LP (pages 20-21) in the September issue was omitted. What he actually wrote was as follows (page 21, from line.3): 'It would hardly be a fair complaint that this ensemble lacks the musical richness and emotional depth of Coleman's earlier recording groups, yet all these men have undergone extensive musical training, and it shows: and while the jazz is, I believe, genuinely free, there is no faking of the sort that is so blatantly obvious on...' etc. Pressure of space has necessitated the holding over the review of the Kenton discographies, promised in the last issue, and the discussion on such matters as the future pattern of jazz releases, the nature of releases from individual companies, the growth of imports, etc. will now appear over a period of four or five issues as part of the record review section. The Kenton discographies review will definitely appear in the November issue, along with the final article in Jim Burn's "Lesser Known Bands of The Forties" series, and a selection of readers' letters dealing with points raised in recent articles by Jack Cooke and Max Harrison.

are drawn from the U.S. Savoy catalogue, and in 1970 others will be added. The Frank Driggs compilations already mentioned are notable for excellent presentation, sixteen tracks per LP, good recording, and detailed information on the sleeves, with the added advantage that Realm, at a suggested retail price of 25/11d., is in the middle price range. Perhaps the most adventurous of Realm's jazz releases is the four LPs by British artists reviewed by Charles Fox in this issue, for commercially this is a field that most companies approach with great caution, particularly as so few of the musicians involved have any name value. Another label, Blue Horizon, along with a great deal that is trendy, has issued some excellent blues LPs by such artists as Elmore James, John Brim, Johnny Shines and Roosevelt Holts.

At the time of writing a great deal of C.B.S.'s energy on the jazz/blues side is being put into the promotion of the repackaged Realms, the four British jazz LPs and such reissue material as the Bukka White, Big Bill Broonzy and Paul Oliver's "Story of the Blues" set. However, by the time this appears in print the first release of Milestone material will have taken place, C.B.S. having recently acquired issue rights for this country. The first releases on the C.B.S. Milestone label will be:-

- 63738 The Immortal Blind Lemon Jefferson
- 63737 The Immortal Fletcher Henderson
- 63735 Fred McDowell — "Long Way From Home"
- 63736 Joe Henderson — "Tetragon"

These should be available around October 1st, the suggested retail price of the label being 37/6d.

America Columbia have, of course, a backlog of jazz/blues material only matched by R.C.A. Victor. Through a curious contractual anomaly, some Okeh items are appearing on the Parlophone label, of which more next month, but aside from this what we get in the future must depend to a considerable extent on the sale of the Realm reissues already available. The next Realm jazz reissue of interest will be an LP of the Rhythmakers titles, though this may not appear until early 1970.

Much of the jazz activity from local C.B.S. is the result of the energy and interest displayed by Mr. David Howells. I understand that the board of directors includes a solitary jazz fan, an event so rare in the major companies that it cannot go unnoticed!



CONTEMPORARY BRITISH JAZZ

TONY OXLEY QUINTET

THE BAPTISED TRAVELLER:

Kenny Wheeler (tpt, fl-h); Evan Parker (ten); Derek Bailey (g); Jeff Clyne (bs); Tony Oxley (d)

London — January 3, 1969

Crossing :: Arrival :: Stone garden :: Preparation
 Realm 52664 (25/11d.)

FRANK RICOTTI QUARTET

OUR POINT OF VIEW:

Frank Ricotti (vib, alt-1); Chris Spedding (g); Chris Laurence (bs, el-bs); Bryan Spring (d)

London —

Late into the night :: Three times loser, three times blueser :: Don't know why :: House in the country :: Abbadatt the cat :: Dark though the sun shines -1 :: Walter L
 Realm 52668 (25/11d.)

HOWARD RILEY TRIO

ANGLE:

Howard Riley (p); Barry Guy (bs); Alan Jackson (d); Barbra Thompson (fl-1)

London — December 3, 1968 and January 2, 1969

Exit :: Gormenghast :: S and S :: Fragment :: Angle :: Aftermath :: Three fragments (1st, 2nd and 3rd movements)-1
 Gill

Realm 52669 (25/11d.)

RAY RUSSELL QUARTET

DRAGON HILL:

Ron Fry (p, el-p); Ray Russell (g); Ron Matthewson (bs); Alan Rushton (d)

London —

Dragon Hill :: Can I have my paper-back back :: We lie naked in white snow

Harry Beckett (tpt, fl-h); Bud Parkes (tpt); Donald Beichtol (tbn); Lyn Dobson (ten) added

London —

Something in the sky :: Mandala
 Realm 52663 (25/11d.)

AFTER A PERIOD when record companies, just like waitresses, kept their eyes turned the other way, it is good to find British-made jazz LPs popping up all over the place. In the case of these CBS records — the first, one hopes, of many — there is the added interest of being able to discern four distinct approaches within the music. Anti-labellers may fidget, but I think it fair to suggest that Frank Ricotti uses elements of pop, that Ray Russell leans on the blues, Howard Riley provides liaison with the academics and Tony Oxley follows the free yet far from easy way. No doubt Frank Ricotti feels a bit sore about always being compared with Gary Burton — the sleeve note points out that he was using the same instrumentation over six years ago — but it is hard not to mention the resemblance, especially when the quartet's repertoire includes a Burton tune, *Walter L*. On the other hand, *Dark though the sun shines* is nothing like Burton (and not only because Ricotti plays alto sax instead of vibes); unfortunately,



ALAN RUSHTON, ROY FRY, RAY RUSSELL & RON MATHEWSON



FRANK RICOTTI & CHRIS SPEDDING



EVAN PARKER, KENNY WHEELER & TONY OXLEY

Chris Spedding's chording — he uses acoustic guitar on this track — is monotonous and the overall ambience uneventful. Spedding is more guileful elsewhere, using feedback to give edge to his tone in *Three times loser* (a Stan Tracey tune) but also using clean-cut chords, a bit like Al Casey used to do, in *Abbadatt the cat*. Frank Ricotti gets the same sort of near-tinkle from the vibes that Gary Burton does; he is a deft, highly gifted player and his group reflects a similar kind of expertise, the music amiable rather than intense, its chief merit the elegance with which the various instruments consort together.

Despite the avant-garde postures in the sleeve-note, the actual music on Ray Russell's LP has a down-home feel about it. Russell points out that he started in a rock-and-roll group, and certainly his playing is full of blues phrases. *Dragon hill* would be a first-rate track if the musicians had not decided to add a touch of portentousness by periodically stopping the pulse to let the guitar or piano noodle round for a bit. In a piece like George Russell's *Honesty* a trick of this kind can generate tension; here one merely wishes the good times would keep rolling. Soulfulness crops up again in *Can I have my paperback back* (with Roy Fry on electric piano) but my favourite track is *We lie in naked snow*, slow and with very simple but rather beautiful single-string playing by Roy Russell. Another influence I haven't commented on so far is that of Miles Davis (or Miles's Quintet to be more precise), exhibiting itself in Russell's fondness for clusters of notes, in Ron Fry occasionally putting on his Herbie Hancock gloves, and in the loose relationships inside the ensemble. It comes through best in *Something in the sky*, with exciting yet controlled solos from Harold Beckett and Lyn Dobson; there are tempo shifts but the pulse stays firm — except during Ron Mathewson's bass solo. The Howard Riley LP has its moments of austerity, especially the *Three fragments* for flute and piano, each of them entirely scored. Riley's reputation as a straight composer also gets reflected in the brittle and ingenious *S & S*, rather like letting all the rockets off at once. Much closer to jazz are the teasing variations on *Exit* (it opens with a theme of alternating eight and eleven bars), the near-funky atmosphere of *Gill*, and *Angle* (it starts off like an impatient waltz), a tune which has been recorded in a big band arrangement by the New Jazz Orchestra. Howard Riley puts much stress on the fact that this trio depends on interaction between its three members. Certainly Alan Jackson can be a discreet as well as a forthright drummer, Riley himself is a pianist who genuflects to Bill Evans and whose classical training seeps through in details of

timing and phrasing, but the real virtuoso is Barry Guy, another of the new generation of bassists who are showing that their instrument represents one area of jazz where classical techniques have something fresh and valuable to offer. Guy's playing on this LP is quite phenomenal, and he provides the most Gothic element in *Gormenghast* (dedicated to the late Merwyn Peake, creator of *Titus Groan*). But the track that seduces me completely is *Fragment* (nothing to do with the other *Three fragments*), which has a ravishing spontaneous quality, like the best kind of folk song, sounding just as though Riley was making the whole thing up — the theme as well, I mean — as he went along.

"The Baptised Traveller", a highly successful example of free improvising inside a relatively tight framework, is distinguished by the solo playing of Kenny Wheeler, undoubtedly *the* musician of 1969, and of Evan Parker, often a shade too much the loyal lieutenant during his stint with John Stevens's Spontaneous Music Ensemble but now a musician who has discovered his own identity. *Crossing* uses a more complicated version of the familiar AABA routine: A starts with a *ff* chord, followed by all-in improvising, followed by a jaunty little theme, while B is shorter, slower and in straight 4/4. This pattern — quick, — slow, — quick, or lively, — calm, — lively — gets repeated in the solos by Evan Parker and Kenny Wheeler. *Arrival*, which takes up only the last quarter of Side One, is ushered in by Jeff Clyne's bass (he is, predictably, enough, in dazzling form) and begins with a short theme stated by muted trumpet and tenor. *Stone garden* is Charlie Mariano's tune, its theme six variations of a question-and-answer pattern, the question (asked by Evan Parker's tenor) changing each time, the answer staying more or less the same. What is remarkable here and elsewhere is the collective playing, the way guitar, bass and drums scamper around behind the two horns. Derek Bailey's part is vital, he takes no proper solos but his repertoire of small, disturbing effects — he seems able to let a note decay without ever actually hitting it — belongs to a virtuoso. The final movement is the shortest, a ten-note row repeated half-time in canon (Wheeler's trumpet keeps a note behind) plus another foray into group improvising. Throughout the whole record, Oxley's drumming provides a continual mosaic, a thread linking the various parts. This LP is in its way the most remarkable of the four, not just because of the splendid solo playing (Kenny Wheeler really is a shy genius) but also for demonstrating how a musician can stay free yet relevant.

CHARLES FOX



BIG BILL BROONZY

BIG BILL'S BLUES:

- Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g)
New York City — March 29, 1932
- 11610-2 *Bull cow blues*
Black Bob (p); unknown bs added
Chicago — February 12, 1936
- C1246-2 *Big Bill blues*
Chicago — January 29, 1937
- C1799-2 *Southern flood blues*
Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g) acc unknown tpt; g
Chicago — January 31, 1937
- C1813-2 *You do me any old way*
Ernest 'Punch' Miller (tpt); Joshua Altheimer (p) replace unknown tpt; g; unknown d added
Chicago — March 30, 1938
- C2158-1 *Trucking little woman*
Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g) acc probably Joshua Altheimer (p); George Barnes (g)
Chicago — May 5, 1938

- C2185-2 *New shake 'em on down*
C2186-1 *Night time is the right time*
unknown bs replaces Barnes
Chicago — September 15, 1938
- C2331-1 *Trouble and lying woman*
Fred Williams (d) replaces unknown bs
Chicago — February 6, 1939
- C2464-1 *Baby I done got wise*
C2466-1 *Just a dream*
Altheimer out
Chicago — September 14, 1939
- WC2737-A *Oh yes*
Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g) acc Blind John Davis (p); Washboard Sam (wbd)
Chicago — June 10, 1940
- WC3080-A *Medicine man blues*
WC3081-A *Looking up at down*
Probably Memphis Slim (p) replaces Davis
Chicago — May 2, 1941
- C3744-1 *When I been drinking*
Ransom Knowling (bs) added
Chicago — July 17, 1941
- C3908-1 *All by myself* >

> Big Bill Broonzy (vcl, g) acc Horace Malcomb (p); Washboard Sam (wbd)

Chicago — December 2, 1941

C4088-1 *Night watchman blues*

Real Jazz M M52648 (25/11d)

IN THE JULY issue I reviewed "The Young Big Bill Broonzy 1928-1935" on Yazoo L-1011;

this bargain release put together by Frank Driggs for Epic brings the story up to the early 'forties. At last there is a representative selection of Broonzy's work through his career as a "race" artist, and listeners can form their own judgement of his consistency as a performer. Personally I am impressed by his quality on so many records; few blues men have had the ability to sustain such a standard over so long a period. This is apparent from *Bull cow blues* which makes interesting comparison with some of the recordings made twenty years later, swinging in similar fashion. Most of the items here are "good-time", and slow blues like *Southern flood* are few. More characteristic are *Trucking little woman*, yet another version of *Dirty mother Fuyer* in thin disguise, or the stomping *All by myself* with Memphis Slim at his barrelhouse best. Of course it's pointless to compare his *Shake 'em on down* with Bukka White's — Big Bill's is essentially an urban version which has George Barnes on electric guitar. (Panassie said that Barnes was white, and this seems likely. Does anyone know anything about him? Are there earlier electric guitar blues?). Several of Big Bill's songs deal with disillusion, like *Done got wise* or *Just a dream*, and his wry humour must have been immensely appealing when the 78's were issued. Favourites must include *Oh yes*, a rocking song, and *Night watchman blues* which I recall on V-Disc during the war. Wholly enjoyable for the price of a V. copy of just one of the original Okehs.

PAUL OLIVER

DAVE BRUBECK AND GERRY MULLIGAN

BLUES ROOTS:

Gerry Mulligan (bar); Dave Brubeck (p-1, prepared p-2); Jack Six (bs, el-bs-3); Alan Dawson (d)

New York City — 1968

Limehouse blues-1, 3 :: Journey-1 :: Cross ties-1, 4 :: Broke blues-1, 2, 3, 5 :: Things ain't what they used to be-1 :: Movin' out-1, 4 :: Blues roots-2

4-Mulligan doubletracked; -5 Brubeck and Dawson doubletracked

CBS S63517 (37/6d.)

BRUBECK MAY not have Lennie Tristano's self-contained theoretical approach, but he has

inherited and expanded on Lennie's prime pianistic quality, awkwardness. Physically, it can be described as a total lack of relaxation; resulting in the ruining of well-conceived phrases by a slightly misplaced accent or by fractionally inaccurate timing, which in turn inhibits the thought-processes, resulting in the predominance of ill-conceived phrases. Put either of these pianists next to a free-blowing soloist — Tristano with Parker or Brubeck with, well, even Mulligan — and they stick out like a sore thumb. In fact, they play as if they have a sore thumb.

Yes I've listened to the record, and things are exactly what they used to be. Except that *Broke* is a "blues" "version" of Bach (the fugue in C minor from Book One of *The Well-Tempered Clavier*) "written" by producer Teo Macero, and the over-dubbing actually adds something to the close of *Movin' out*. Brubeck's janglebox piano on two tracks goes some way towards disguising his defects, which are displayed interminably in *Cross ties*, an arthritic attempt at 6 beats against 4. Mark Gardner, referring to my July "Postscript", asked "Do Dave Brubeck alternate takes really matter?" but, of course, nothing by Brubeck really matters — music is music, and discography is something else again.

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS

I PUT A SPELL ON YOU:

Jelacy 'Screamin' Jay' Hawkins (vcl) with unidentified personnel; Vocal group-1

1950s

You made me love you :: I put a spell on you :: Alligator wine :: Little demon :: There's something wrong with you :: Orange-coloured sky-1 :: Yellow coat :: Give me back my boots and saddle-1 :: Hong Kong :: Person to person :: Frenzy :: I love Paris-1

Direction M8-63481 (37/6d.)

TO GET THE full impact of Screamin' Jay you have to actually see his act, complete with the

initial leap out of a coffin, the individual apparel, the flash paper lighting from his fingertips, the fuse boxes, and 'Henry' the painted skull. Although termed a rock-and-roll singer, at his most surrealistic he is, as they say, beyond category.

Person to person suggests that Hawkins could sing a capable blues if he wished to do so, and the opening part of *I love Paris* shows him to have a reasonable way with a pop number, but such irrelevancies do not enter into the other performances. *I put a spell* is Hawkins's most famous number and this is the definitive version, complete with appropriate screams and yells, but the infinite variety of vocal noises on *Alligator wine*, the unusual lyrics of *Yellow coat*, the 'Chinese' vocal on *Hong Kong*, and the extension of the theme of *I love Paris* also have much to interest the connoisseur. The supporting groups are adequate, the electronic effects admirable.

Regrettably, while critics have written at great length about such matters as Albert Ayler's vocalised tone, they have to date ignored this matter of the avant-garde vocal. The links between Hawkins's vocals on *Alligator wine* and *Hong Kong* and the work of a whole group of contemporary saxophone players are too obvious to have been missed, I would have thought. I offer this as a field for future research.

31 minutes of positively unique music.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

ROOSEVELT HOLTS

PRESENTING THE COUNTRY BLUES:

Roosevelt Holts (vcl, g); Babe Stovall (g)

Franklinton, La — January 27, 1966

Feelin' sad and blue

Stovall out

New Orleans — February 3, 1966

Prison bound blues :: Maggie Campbell blues :: I'm going to build right on that shore :: Lead pencil blues :: Another mule kickin' in my stall :: Big road blues :: Let's talk it all over again :: Red river blues

L.H. Lane (hca-1) added

Bogalusa, La — August 28, 1966

Little bitty woman :: The good book teach you-1 :: She put me outdoors

Blue Horizon M 7-63201 (37/6d.)

A DISCOVERY of David Evans, Holts is a Mississippi born singer who once worked with Tommy

Johnson, and at the time of these recordings was 61 years of age. Two performances from these sessions were included on the "Goin' Up The Country" LP (Decca LK4931).

One has to make no allowance for Holts's age in assessing this record, for both his singing and guitar playing could be that of a man in his thirties. He has a voice that is strong and clear, though his lyrics are drawn from a stock repertoire and his excellent versions of *Maggie Campbell* and *Big road* are, as might be expected, strongly in the Johnson manner. *Feelin' sad*, *Let's talk* and *Red river* also have fine vocals, but it is his guitar playing that is the most striking aspect of his work. He plays very good bottleneck style on the two spirituals — *I'm going* and *The good book* — but on all tracks his guitar backings and solo passages offer a great deal of variety, supporting David Evans's comment that his "guitar style is one of the most subtle to be found on records, with its delicate touch and rhythmic shifts."

This is an outstanding LP and a remarkable debut for a previously

unknown blues artist. One can only speculate on just how many really fine singers were overlooked in preceding decades, and be thankful that researchers like David Evans can still find artists of this calibre. Playing time 32½ minutes, recording very good.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

B.B. KING

B.B. KING STORY — BORN IN ITTA BENA MISSISSIPPI:

B.B. King (vcl, g) acc Willie Mitchell (tpt); Ben Branch (ten); Hank Crawford (alt); Calvin Newborn (g); Tuff Green (bs); probably Earl Forest (d)

Memphis — 1952

MM-1682 *3 O'clock blues*

B.B. King (vcl, g); acc probably Floyd Jones (tpt); Bill Harvey (ten); George Coleman (alt); Connie McBooker (p); James Walker (bs); Ted Curry (d)

Houston — 1953

probably similar accompaniment

MM-2121 *You upset me baby*

MM-2139 *Sneakin' around*

B.B. King (vcl, g) acc Kenny Sands (tpt); Lawrence Burdine (alt); Johnny Board (ten); Floyd Newman (bar); Millard Lee (p); Jymie Merritt (bs); Ted Curry (d)

Los Angeles — 1956

MM-3058-1 *Bad luck*

MM-3152 *Troubles, troubles, troubles*

B.B. King (vcl, g); acc Kenny Sands, Henry Boozier (tpt); Pluma Davis (tbn); Lawrence Burdine (alt); Johnny Board (ten); Barney Hubert (bar); Millard Lee (p); Marshall York (bs); Sonny Freeman (d)

Los Angeles — 1959

Sweet thing

B.B. King (vcl, g) acc probably Kenny Sands (tpt); Johnny Board, Bobby Forte (ten); Duke Jethro (p, org); Leo Lauchie (bs); Sonny Freeman (d)

Los Angeles — 1961

Let me love you :: Beautician blues :: Worst thing in my life :: Eyesight to the blind

probably similar personnel

Shot gun blues

Blue Horizon M-7-63216 (37/6d.)

THE FIRST B.B. King record I bought, a dozen years ago, was *Bad luck* and *Sweet little angel*

on RPM 468. For a long time I heard nothing by him to equal it, and today I still think it was one of his very best couplings. *Bad luck* is on this album and gives me an opportunity to evaluate in relation to a number of others of similar and earlier vintage. It seems to me that a lot of the success of this and subsequent titles lies in the accompanying orchestra which included Kenny Sands and Johnny Board, sidemen who fitted perfectly into his sense of dynamics, effecting a perfect rapport with his guitar line. Compare any of the track with these musicians on with say, *Sneakin' around*. On the latter the backing is more mechanical and B.B. King dangerously near being sentimental and trite. Yet there is a notable difference between the hard hitting Los Angeles recordings and the early tracks, like *3 o'clock blues* made in 1952 which is notably more low-down in feeling. In all his titles King dominates with long improvisations on his guitar and pitched-up, soaring vocals. Though "born in Itta Bena" is the loose theme of this collection there is nothing of Mississippi in it. Instead there is a strong influence of T-Bone Walker in the guitar work; of Joe Turner in some titles like *Please love me*; even of Doctor Clayton on *Sweet thing*. It's one of the extraordinary things about blues history that B.B. King can be the cousin of Bukka White (see the review in this issue) — they could be light-years apart. White was an anachronism, a survivor from a past era of blues; B.B. King anticipated — a generation of blues singers were to be influenced by him. This is an excellent collection of, generally, consistently high standard drawn in the main from Kent issues. It is Volume One so there'll be more to follow and perhaps there's not enough of his really early tracks to make an effective first in a series. But there is much good listening which will convert anyone still wavering over B.B. King. No discographical details on the sleeve so I am indebted to *Blues Records 1943-1966* for those given here.

PAUL OLIVER

THELONIOUS MONK

MONK'S BLUES:

Charlie Rouse (ten); Thelonious Monk (p); possibly Larry Gales (bs, el-bs-1); unknown 5 brass, 4 reeds, g, d; Oliver Nelson (arr cond)

Los Angeles — 1968

Let's cool one :: Reflections :: Rootie tootie :: Just a glance at love :: Brilliant corners :: Consecutive seconds-1 :: Monk's point :: Trinkle tinkle :: Straight, no chaser

CBS S63609 (37/6d.)

HAVING already had his photo on the cover of *Time* some years back, Thelonious Sphere

Monk has now been accorded the ultimate indignity — an album with Oliver Nelson. Do you remember that *Down Beat* "Blindfold Test" where Monk commented on performances of his compositions ("He added another note to the song. A note that's not supposed to be there.")? I wonder what he made of Nelson's bowdlerization of *Brilliant corners*, which omits the tempo-doubling until the final chorus and irons out the 7 bars of the release into 8? Or the tasteless coda to *Trinkle tinkle*, which incidentally ends in the wrong key? And producer Teo Macero's literally incredible statement on the sleeve — "You know, the arrangements never once got in his way" — is contradicted in the 17th chorus of *Straight, no chaser*, to mention only the most obvious instance. I expect what Macero means is that Thelonious let it go with a mysterious smile, meanwhile probably saying to himself "Oliver Nelson doesn't know what's happening". In fact, the whole thing is grotesque, and Monk underlines the monumental incongruity by playing quite seriously, though not without a certain sly humour: after Nelson's attempt to create a Monk voicing on the theme of *Monk's point*, the pianist hammers home the relevant phrase for the next five choruses and then stops suddenly, thereby exposing the self-consciously angular "accompanying" riff! Teo Macero composed the two shortest, most commercial numbers, *Consecutive seconds* and *Just a glance*, and he might have done better to put Oliver Nelson on baritone with Brubeck and record Monk with arrangements by Gerry Mulligan. And who was the master-mind who decided to have a guitar comping on some of the piano solos? BRIAN PRIESTLEY

ARTIE SHAW ORCHESTRA

FREE FOR ALL:

Malcolm Crain, Johnny Best, Tom DiCarlo (tpt); Harry Rodgers, George Arus (tbn); Artie Shaw (clt); Les Robinson, Art Masters (alt, clt); Tony Pastor (ten, vcl-1); Fred Petry (ten); Les Burness (p); Al Avola (g); Ben Ginsberg (bs); Cliff Leeman (d)

New York City — May 13, 1937

B21134-2 *All alone*

Hank Freeman (alt, clt) replaces Masters

New York City — May 18, 1937

B21167-1 *Night and day*

B21168-1 *I surrender dear*

B21169-1 *Blue skies*

B21170-1 *Someday sweetheart*

New York City — July 22, 1937

B21425-1 *Sweet Adeline-1*

Jules Rubin (ten) replaces Petry

New York City — August 4, 1937

B21459-1 *Fee fi fo fum*

B21461-1 *The chant*

B21462-1 *Blues march, part 1*

B21463-1 *Blues march, part 2*

New York City — September 17, 1937

B21713-1 *Nightmare*

>

B21715-1 *Free wheeling-2*

-2 vcl by Leo Watson on this track

New York City — October 18, 1937

B21898-1 *I'm yours*

B21899-2 *Just you, just me*

B21900-1 *Free for all*

New York City — December 30, 1937

B22241-1 *Non-stop flight*

RealM M52636 (25/11d.)

THESE tracks are by Shaw's first conventional band, following the commercial failure of his 'with strings' group. On the whole it was a rather colourless band, lacking major soloists, and at times being hampered by a somewhat plodding rhythm section.

The more overtly jazz performances are not too successful, due to a lack of individuality in arrangements and solos. An exception is *Blues march* which, despite its kitsch quality and slightly uneasy blend of Dixieland and big band swing, has good work from Best, Arus and Leeman, and an unexpectedly effective solo by Shaw. There are odd passages of interest on some of the other up-tempo tracks; Best's good solo on *The chant* — not the Morton number incidentally — Leo Watson's all too brief scat vocal on *Free wheeling*, and Shaw's own contribution to *Non-stop*, but the most successful performances are realised on the show tunes and Shaw's theme song, the moody *Nightmare*. Shaw was always a thoughtful and skilled musician, and numbers like *I surrender dear*, *Someday sweetheart* and *I'm yours* invariably drew from him attractive melodic solos. He is quoted in the sleeve notes as saying that his primary concern was to feature his clarinet within a sympathetic setting and not to indulge in lengthy virtuoso displays, and the brevity of his solos on a high proportion of these tracks tends to bear this out.

This is a pleasant record of its type, reasonably recorded, and with a playing time of 45 minutes. I would think that its major appeal must be for big band aficionados or those seeking nostalgia. The sleeve notes state that *Non-stop flight* is a previously unissued master, but this is not so.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

JOHNNY SHINES

LAST NIGHT'S DREAM:

Johnny Shines (vcl, g)

Chicago — May 1968

Last night's dream :: I had a good home

Willie Dixon (bs) added

same session

Solid gold

Clifton James (d) added

same session

From dark 'til dawn :: I will be kind to you :: I don't know ::

Mean fisherman

Walter 'Shakey' Horton (hca) added

same session

Baby don't you think I know :: Black panther

Otis Spann (p) added

same session

Pipeline blues

Blue Horizon S7 (M M7)-63212 (37/6d.)

ON THE EVIDENCE of this LP Shines must be one of the finest blues men still working within

an older tradition. Though derivative to an extent — there are even occasional echoes of Robert Johnson — his singing is both expressive and powerful, his slide guitar work beautifully executed. The comparison of any track on this release with the ever increasing number of releases by white 'blues singers' provides a useful reminder of the absurdity of most of the latter.

Particularly impressive here are the moody *From dark*, *Last night's Pipeline* and *Mean*, all taken at a slowish tempo, Shines's singing is marked by a pronounced vibrato and the occasional use of falsetto, its impact being considerable. There is some superb slide work on *Last night's*, *I had a good* and *Mean*, and on the tracks where Horton, Dixon and James are present the backing is first

rate. *Black panther* is unusual in its oblique expression of disapproval of its subject matter — the Black Panther movement not the animal — and *From dark* and *I had* also have interesting lyrics. Shines varies his guitar work according to the nature of his material, the shifting patterns behind the vocal on *I had* and the rather understated solo on *I don't know* being cases in point. In all, a striking 33½ minutes, very well recorded, and in my opinion one of the finest showcases for a currently active blues singer to have appeared of late.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

REX STEWART

REX STEWART MEMORIAL:

Rex Stewart (cnt, val-1); George Stevenson (tbn); Rudy Powell (alt, clt); Bingie Madison (ten); Roger 'Ram' Ramires (p); Billy Taylor (bs); Jack Maisel (d)

New York City — December 12, 1934

16410-1 *Stingaree*

16411-1 *Baby, ain't you satisfied-1*

Rex Stewart (cnt); Lawrence Brown (tbn); Johnny Hodges (alt, sop); Harry Carney (bar, clt); Duke Ellington (p); Ceele Burke (g); Billy Taylor (bs); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — December 16, 1936

B4369-A *Rexatious*

B4370-A *Lazy man's shuffle*

B4370-B *Lazy man's shuffle**

add Arthur Whetsol, Charles 'Cootie' Williams (tpt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Juan Tizol (v-tbn); Otto Hardwicke (alt); Barney Bigard (clt, ten); Hayes Alvis (bs); Fred Guy (g) replaces Burke

New York City — July 17, 1936

B19564-1 *Trumpet in spades*

Rex Stewart (cnt); Freddy Jenkins (tpt); Johnny Hodges (alt, sop); Harry Carney (bar); Duke Ellington (p, arr); Brick Fleagle (g); Hayes Alvis (bs); Jack Maisel (d)

New York City — July 7, 1937

M549-1 *Back room romp*

M549-2 *Back room romp**

M550-2 *Love in my heart*

M551-2 *Sugar Hill shim sham*

M551-2 *Sugar Hill shim sham**

M552-1 *Tea and trumpets*

M552-2 *Tea and trumpets**

Rex Stewart (cnt); Louis Bacon (tpt, vcl-1); Joe Nanton (tbn); Barney Bigard (clt); Duke Ellington (p, arr); Billy Taylor (bs); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — March 20, 1939

M994-1 *San Juan Hill*

M995-1 *I'll come back for more-1*

M996-1 *Fat stuff serenade*

Note: An asterisk denotes a previously unissued master.

RealM M52628 (25/11d.)

OF THE TWO pre-Ellington tracks, *Baby* is inconsequential and taken up in the main with

Stewart's vocal, while *Stingaree* is most notable for the excellent solo passages by Powell both on clarinet and alto. *Trumpet in spades* has flamboyant virtuoso playing by Stewart but in my opinion was the least successful of Ellington's 'concerto' pieces, and certainly not on a par with the later *Boy meets horn*. Here it is the small group tracks that best highlight Stewart's talents. It is a commonplace to comment that few musicians associated for any length of time with the Ellington band have flourished once they left it, but in Stewart's case this was particularly evident. Prior to joining Ellington Stewart had contributed worthwhile solos within the context of a big band, and he more than most musicians needed a disciplined framework within which to work. Once he became a leader in his own right his playing became increasingly eccentric and shapeless, ultimately descending to little more than a series of trick effects. His last British tour was a sad-denying event, not just through the fact that his playing was a travesty of what it had once been but because he himself was aware of it.

Ellington's guiding hand is everywhere in evidence on the small group performances included on this LP, as both arranger and composer. Such factors as the marvellous cohesion of the groups

the deceptive casualness of the ensemble passages, and the outstanding solos by the sidemen — Hodges on *Lazy man's* Carney on both takes of *Sugar Hill*, Bigard on *Fat stuff* are but three examples — are worthy of note, but it is instructive to play the LP through once with Stewart's own part alone in mind. When things were going well his playing was marked by an underlying lyricism, as on *Fat stuff* and *Love*, while his more extrovert solos — those on *Rexatious*, *Back room*, *Tea* and *San Juan* are typical — had about them a dramatic quality allied to a jaunty virtuosity that make them singular. It is interesting to hear the alternative takes for along with the occasional fluffs there are solos as good and in a few instances better than on the originals. Stewart was a vastly inconsistent soloist, but his finest playing, and a high proportion of these performances offer this, prove that he was one of the most unique talents in jazz. This is a splendid LP, running for 42½ minutes, and though there is some surface noise from dubbed originals on several tracks it should worry nobody whose primary concern is the quality of the music. ALBERT MCCARTHY

STORY OF THE BLUES

- FRA-FRA TRIBESMEN** (vcl, fiddle, rattle)
Nangodi, Northern Territory, Ghana — June 1964
Yarum praise songs
- MISSISSIPPI JOHN HURT** (vcl, g)
New York City — December 28, 1928
- 401481-B *Stack o' lee blues*
BLIND SAMMIE (Blind Willie McTell) (vcl, talking, g)
Atlanta, Ga. — October 30, 1929
- 149300-1 *Travelin' blues*
CHARLEY PATTON (vcl, g)
New York City — January 30, 1934
- 14727-1 *Stone pony blues*
BLIND LEMON JEFFERSON (vcl, g)
Chicago, Ill. — March 14, 1927
- 80523-B *Black snake moan*
LEAD BELL (Huddie Ledbetter) (vcl, g)
New York City — March 25, 1935
- 17181-2 *Pig meat papa*
TEXAS ALEXANDER (vcl); prob. Lonnie Johnson (g)
San Antonio, Texas — November 27, 1929
- 403357-A *Broken yo-yo*
PEG LEG HOWELL (vcl, g); unknown vln
Atlanta, Ga — April 10, 1929
- 148236-1 *Broke and hungry blues*
BARBECUE BOB AND LAUGHING CHARLEY: Robert Hicks (vcl, talkin, g); Charley Lincoln (vcl, talking, g)
Atlanta, Ga — November 9, 1927
- 145192-2 *It won't be long now — Part 1*
HENRY WILLIAMS (vcl, g); Eddie Anthony (vcl, vln)
Atlanta, Ga — April 19, 1928
- 146148-2 *Georgia crawl*
MISSISSIPPI JOOK BAND: Roosevelt Graves (g); Cooney Vaughn (p); Uaroy Graves (tamb)
Hattiesburg, Miss — late July, 1936
- HAT-141-3 *Dangerous woman*
MEMPHIS JUG BAND: Will Shade (hca); Charlie Burse (g); Jab Jones (p, jug); Robert Burse (wbd, cowbells, blocks)
Chicago, Ill — November 6, 1934
- C783-2 *Gator wobble*
BESSIE SMITH (vcl); Louis Bacon (cnt); Charlie Green (tbn); Clarence Williams (p); Floyd Casey (d)
New York City — June 11, 1931
- 151594-1 *In the house blues*
LILLIAN GLINN (vcl); unknown cnt; p; bbs
New Orleans, La — April 24, 1928
- 146180-1 *Shake it down*
BERTHA "CHIPPIE" HILL (vcl); Louis Armstrong (cnt); Richard M. Jones (p)
Chicago, Ill — November 23, 1926
- 9950-A *Pratt City blues*
BUTTERBEANS AND SUSIE (vcl duet with speech) with Eddie Heywood and his Sons of Harmony; unknown tpt; tbn; alt; Eddie Heywood (p); poss. unknown bj
New York City — February 1, 1930

- 403711-B *What it takes to bring you back (Mama keeps it all the time)*
LEROY CARR (vcl, p); Scrapper Blackwell (g)
New York City — March 16, 1932
- 11499-A *Midnight hour blues*
FABER SMITH (vcl); Jimmy Yancey (p)
Chicago, Ill — February 23, 1940
- WC-2956-A *East St. Louis blues*
PEETIE WHEATSTRAW (The Devil's Son-In-Law) (vcl, p); prob. Will Weldon (steel g); poss unknown g
Chicago, Ill — March 25, 1935
- C-924-A *Good whiskey blues*
CASEY BILL (vcl, steel g); prob Black Bob (p); unknown bs
Chicago, Ill — February 12, 1936
- C-1256-1 *W.P.A. blues*
BO CARTER (vcl, g)
New York City — June 4, 1931
- 404930-A *Sorry feeling blues*
ROBERT JOHNSON (vcl, g)
Dallas, Texas — June 20, 1937
- DAL-395-2 *Little queen of spades*
BUKKA WHITE (vcl, g); Washboard Sam (wbd)
Chicago, Ill — March 7, 1940
- WC-2981-A *Parchman farm blues*
MEMPHIS MINNIE (vcl, g); Little Son Joe (g); unknown bs
Chicago, Ill — May 21, 1941
- C-4765-1 *Me and my chauffeur blues*
BLIND BOY FULLER (vcl, g); Sonny Terry (hca)
Memphis, Tenn — July 12, 1939
- MEM-110-1 *I want some of your pie*
BROWNIE MCGHEE (vcl, g); Jordan Webb (hca); Washboard Slim (wbd)
Chicago, Ill — May 23, 1941
- C-3791-1 *Million lonesome women*
JOE WILLIAMS (vcl, g); Sonny Boy Williamson (hca); Ransom Knowling (bs); Judge Riley (d)
Chicago, Ill — July 22, 1947
- CCO-4836-1 *Wild cow moan*
BIG BILL (vcl, g); Memphis Slim (p); Ransom Knowling (bs); Washboard Sam (wbd)
Chicago, Ill — July 17, 1941
- C-3908-1 *All by myself*
JOE TURNER (vcl); Pete Johnson (p)
New York City — December 30, 1938
- 23892-1 *Roll 'em Pete*
OTIS SPANN (vcl, p); Walter Horton (hca); Willie Dixon (bs); Clifton James (d)
Chicago, Ill — May 1968
- Bloody murder*
ELMORE JAMES (vcl, g); unknown p; bs-g; bs; d
Chicago, Ill — c. 1963
- Sunnyland*
JOHNNY SHINES (vcl, g); Willie Dixon (bs); Clifton James (d)
Chicago, Ill — May 1968
- I don't know*

CBS 66218 (43/9d.)

NOT THE WHOLE story, of course, but a great part of it; and an engrossing hour and a half's tale it makes. There are four chapters: "Origins", "Blues and Entertainment", "The Thirties, Urban and Rural", "World War II and After". (This should not suggest that All Blues — less fortunate than Gaul — are Divided into Four Parts). The album has been put together with skill and care, and Ian Cameron's cover design is superb. "The Story of the Blues" is a remarkable piece of work. Remarkable first because only one company's vault was accessible. Yet here are Jefferson and Patton, Leadbelly and Bessie, Leroy Carr and Robert Johnson Two of the great race series of the '20s could be drawn upon, and the first record ("Origins"/"Entertainment") is packed with memorable music, brilliantly prefaced by one of Oliver's Ghanaian field-recordings. (At last some data for the "Africanism" controversy!) The first eight tracks form a galaxy-indeed, but the brightest star is Willie McTell's

Travelin', a medley of blues songs and storytelling set to a train-wheel rhythm and a very lovely performance. The next chapter considers some of the ways in which musicians performed on stage or in the dance-hall, and is, properly, a mixture of gaiety and sexiness, the high spirits of *Dangerous woman* and *Gator wobble* contrasting with the low-down exuberance of Lillian Glinn; and, standing out like a beacon, there is "Chippie" Hill's tremendous duet with Armstrong.

The blues of the '30s portrayed a different mood, well illustrated on Side 3. (Vocalion/Okeh are very strong in this period.) There is topical interest, both urban and rural, in the pieces by Wheatstraw, Weldon and White; and there is the simply moving appeal of *Midnight hour blues* and *Little queen of spades* and Bo Carter's sensitive *Sorry feeling blues*. In Memphis Minnie's track, as in others, we see something of what was to come — the tightly-integrated Chicago band. (Chicago's massive influence is shown in the frequency of its appearance as recording-location.) But half of Side 4 is concerned, implicitly or explicitly, with the '40s, with established artists like Fuller and Broonzy; and it is a shock to hear this music, to be reminded of K.C.'s burgeoning by the powerful Turner-Johnson interplay, and then to find oneself in the '60s, late '60s at that, with Spann and Shines. For there is a gap between 1947 (Williams) and 1963 (James), and in this interval some fascinating and important developments occurred. *Wild cow* and *All by myself* look forward to this era; *Bloody murder* looks back at it; yet of the music of the '50s itself there is not a trace. It is, after all, *these blues* that — in the words of Oliver's sleeve note — have "become a major influence on the popular music of the world" — initially, at least. An inevitable omission, it seems, but one unfortunate in a "documentary history of the blues".

"Story" is not, and does not pretend to be, an account of Negro folk music, but it does show many of the foundation-stones upon which the blues structure was built; and no one who has read the discography above — incidentally a slightly amended version of Oliver's — will need to be told that here are many of the best craftsmen and craftswomen. In its way, within its appointed limits, this compilation is nearly as good as the "American Folk Music" set which Folkways put out 17 years ago. I think it will in time be seen as one of the finest of Paul Oliver's many services to the blues.

TONY RUSSELL

Note: A review of the Paul Oliver *The Story of the Blues* book will appear in the November issue

CHICK WEBB

STOMPIN' AT THE SAVOY:

CHICK WEBB AND HIS ORCHESTRA:

Mario Bauza, Reunald Jones (tpt); Taft Jordan (tpt, vcl-1); Sandy Williams (tbn); Edgar Sampson (alt, bar, clt, arr); Pete Clark (alt, clt); Elmer Williams (ten); Joe Steele (p); John Trueheart (g); John Kirby (bs); Chick Webb (d)

New York City — December 20, 1933

152658-1 *On the sunny side of the street-1*

New York City — January 15, 1934

152659-2 *At the darktown strutters' ball*

152686-3 *When dreams come true*

152687-2 *Let's get together*

New York City — May 9, 1934

152733-2 *I can't dance (I got ants in my pants)-1*

152734-2 *Imagination-2*

152735-4 *Why should I beg for love-1*

-2 vcl by Chuck Richards

New York City — May 18, 1934

152740-2 *Stompin' at the Savoy*

Bobby Stark (tpt) replaces Jones; Fernando Arbello (tbn); Wayman Carver (ten, fl) added

New York City — July 6, 1934

152769-2 *Blue minor*

152770-2 *True-2*

152771-2 *Lonesome moments*

152772-2 *If it ain't love-3*

-2 vcl by Chuck Richards; -3 vcl by Charlie Linton

TAFT JORDAN AND HIS MOB:

Taft Jordan (tpt); Ward Silloway (tbn); Johnny Mince (clt); Elmer Williams (ten); Teddy Wilson (p); Bobby Johnson (g); John Kirby (bs); Eddie Dougherty (d)

New York City — February 21, 1935

16906-2 *Night wind*

16907-2 *If the moon turns green*

New York City — February 22, 1935

16914-2 *Devil in the moon*

16915-2 *Louisiana fairy tale*

Realm M52537 (25/11d.)

LIKE THE Roosevelt Holts LP, this was inadvertently missed when originally issued. It neatly

ties up the pre-Decca big band Webbs with a bonus of the four Jordan tracks.

Several performances are entirely commercial, though even when Messrs. Richards and Linton do their worst, as on *Imagination*, *True* and *If it ain't*, there are salvaging passages from Elmer Williams and Jordan. The latter is also featured as a vocalist, at this time modelling everything on Armstrong, and though *Why should I* and *I can't dance* can hardly be described as inspired themes the obeisance to the master on *On the sunnyside* is well done. The instrumental tracks give one an idea as to why the band was so popular with the Savoy Ballroom dancers, for here we have swing music at least a year before the term became widely known. Edgar Sampson was a very good craftsman arranger-composer, all but *Darktown* of the six instrumentals being his work. The outstanding soloist is Sandy Williams, heard on *Let's get*, *Blue minor*, *Stompin'*, *When dreams*, *Lonesome* and *Darktown*, but Sampson's Carter-ish alto, Jordan's trumpet, and Elmer Williams's tenor are also heard in attractive individual contributions. *Stompin'* has eight bars of muted trumpet from Bauza that is, I believe, his only solo on record. The band generates a fine drive on these tracks, though in a year or two it was to become more polished.

Jordan plays muted throughout on his own pleasant if uneventful dates. These are relaxed, casual performances, with solos of varying degrees of interest by the front line men and Wilson, the latter providing the most eloquent moments. Silloway has some good passages using a burry tone, Mince is an adept Goodman follower, while Williams and Jordan play capably, the latter less tied to Armstrong than on the big band numbers. In summary, an attractive if far from essential LP, worth obtaining if this period is within the scope of your interests. Recording is satisfactory, playing time a good 47½ minutes. If *Stompin'* is really take 2 it is previous unissued, but I think it is actually the usual take 4.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

BUKKA WHITE

Bukka White (vcl, g) acc unknown g

Chicago — September 2, 1937

C 1996-2 *Pinebluff Arkansas*

C 1997-1 *Shake 'em on down*

Washboard Sam (wbd), replaces unknown g

Chicago — March 7, 1940

WC-2977-A *Black train blues*

WC-2978-A *Strange place blues*

WC-2979-A *Where can I change my clothes?*

WC-2980-A *Sleepy man blues*

WC-2981-A *Parchman Farm blues*

WC-2982-A *Good gin blues*

Chicago — March 8, 1940

WC-2987-A *High fever blues*

WC-2988-A *District attorney blues*

WC-2989-A *Fixin' to die blues*

WC-2990-A *Aberdeen Mississippi blues*

WC-2991-A *Bukka's jitterbug swing*

WC-2992-A *Special stream line*

Realm Jazz M52629 (25/11d.)

BOOKER Washington White, or "Bukka" White as he was called on record, is one of the legend-

ary figures of the blues. There used to be one of those cliches lines much loved in the earlier days of jazz/blues appreciation which ran: "If you don't appreciate Bessie Smith you can't appreciate jazz" (or blues); If there's truth in this kind of axiom it applies to Bukka

white who was the quintessential blues singer, unaffected by and unaware of changing fashions in singing, building his blues about his experience, telling it like it was for him. Some of his blues were sung to a pounding beat emphasised by the washboard like *Sleepy man blues*, or repeat rhythm phrases as on *Parchman farm*. On a few he played beautiful slide guitar — listen to the thrilling opening of *Good gin blues* for example. His voice was rough, guttural but yet musical with a marvellous vibrato which gave every sung note a rich texture. Bukka White had led a difficult life and spent a period in Parchman Farm (where, as "Barrelhouse" White he recorded a couple of tracks for the Library of Congress) and his blues are in many instances about the circumstances that placed him there, or kept him there. Others are concerned with death — *Strange place*

or *Fixin' to die*, one of the finest blues of all time; still others are about trains and on these he does imitations of the rhythms of the wheels, the whistles, even the air brakes. Twelve of these titles were made at a two-day session in 1940 but two were made some three years earlier, *Pinebluff* and *Shake 'em on down*. On the former he is evidently influenced by Peetie Wheatstraw, but the second is entirely his own song and much imitated by other singers. A listen to Big Bill Broonzy's version reveals the directness of Bukka's original. The cover picture of this lp is quite hideous (teeth in a jar with squeezed toothpaste — not even "white") but the sleeve notes by Simon Napier are excellent. At 25/11 this is an absolute gift.

PAUL OLIVER



REPACKAGED REALM JAZZ LPs

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

LOUIS ARMSTRONG PLAYS W.C. HANDY:

Louis Armstrong (tpt, vcl-1); James 'Trummy' Young (tbn); Barney Bigard (clt); Billy Kyle (p); Arvell Shaw (bs); Barrett Deems (d); Velma Middleton (vcl-2)

Chicago — July 12, 1954

CCO5521 *Aunt Hagar's blues-1*

CCO5522 *Hesitating blues-1,2*

CCO5523 *Ole miss*

CCO5524 *Beale Street blues-1*

CCO5525 *Loveless love-1,2*

CCO5526 *Long gone-1,2*

Chicago — July 13, 1954

CCO5527 *Memphis blues-1*

CCO5528 *St. Louis blues-1,2*

CCO5529 *Atlanta blues-1*

Chicago — July 14, 1954

CCO5530 *Chantez les bas-1*

CCO5531 *Yellow dog blues-1*

Realm M M52067 (25/11d.)

CHARLIE BYRD

PRELUDE:

Charlie Byrd (acoustic g)

Hackensack, N.J. — 1957

Prelude :: My funny valentine :: Little girl blue :: My heart stood still :: Spring is here

Tom Newson (fl) added

same date

Interlude

Al Lucas (bs); Bobby Donaldson (d) added

same date

A foggy day :: Spanish guitar blues

Newson switches to ten, Byrd to electric g

same date

Chuck a tuck :: Homage to Charlie Christian

Realm M M52190 (25/11d.)

ERROLL GARNER TRIO

ALL OF ME:

Erroll Garner (p); John Levy (bs); George De Hart (d)

New York City — September 25, 1945

5839 *Somebody loves me*

5840 *Indiana*

John Simmons (bs); Alvin Stoller (d) replace Levy and De Hart

Los Angeles — March 29, 1949

B4400 *I cover the waterfront*

B4402 *Penthouse serenade*

B4403 *Love walked in*

B4407 *Ghost of a chance*

B4408 *Stompin' at the Savoy*

B4415 *I can't believe that you're in love with me*

B4417 *Undecided*

B4418 *Red sails in the sunset*

Los Angeles — Summer 1949

B4526 *She's funny that way*

B4527 *Until the real thing comes along*

B4528 *Confessin'*

B4529 *Stormy weather*

Realm M M52116 (25/11d.)

LIVIN' WITH THE BLUES

BROWNIE McGHEE (g, vcl) acc Ernest Hayes (p); Roy

Gaines, Carl Lynch (g); Al Lucas (bs); Bobby Donaldson (d)

New York City — September 22, 1958

Living with the blues

MEMPHIS MINNIE (vcl, g) acc Sunnyland Slim (p); unknown bs; d

Chicago — 1950

1217 *Kidman blues*

JOHN LEE HOOKER (vcl, g) acc Eddie Kirkland (g); unknown bs; d

Hackensack, N.J. — c. 1954

When my wife quit me

ST LOUIS JIMMY (James Oden) (vcl) acc Sunnyland Slim (p); unknown g; bs

Chicago — 1951

Trying to change my ways

PEE WEE HUGHES (vcl, hca) acc unknown d

New Orleans — 1949

1012 *I'm a country boy*

CURLEY WEAVER (vcl, g); Blind Willie McTell (g)

Atlanta — 1949

She don't treat me good no more

SUNNYLAND SLIM (Albert Laundrew) (vcl, p); acc unknown ten; g; bs; d

Chicago — 1951

R1513 *Orphan boy blues*

DENNIS McMILLAN (vcl, g)

Linden, N.J. — 1949

AM-1056 *Poor little angel girl*

FRANK EDWARDS (vcl, hca) acc unknown 2 g

Atlanta — 1949

1265 *Gotta get together -1*

-1 guitarists probably Curley Weaver and Blind Willie McTell

BLIND WILLIE McTELL (vcl, g)

Atlanta — 1949

1267 *A to Z blues*

DAVID WYLIE (vcl, g)

Atlanta — 1949

You're gonna weep and moan

PAPA LIGHTFOOT (vcl, hca) acc unknown p; Paul 'Guitar Red' Johnson (g); unknown bs; d

Atlanta — 1954

SPL-7201 *That mean old train*

Realm M M52209 (25/11d.)

>

FATS NAVARRO**MEMORIAL, VOLUME 1:****BE-BOP BOYS:**

Fats Navarro, Kenny Dorham (tpt); Sonny Stitt (alt); Morris Lane (ten); Eddie de Verteuill (bar); Bud Powell (p); Al Hall (bs); Kenny Clarke (d)

New York City — September 6, 1946

- S3346 *Boppin' a riff, Part 1*
- S3347 *Boppin' a riff, Part 2*
- S3348 *Fat boy, Part 1*
- S3349 *Fat boy, Part 2*
- S3350 *Everything's cool, Part 1*
- S3351 *Everything's cool, Part 2*

FATS NAVARRO AND HIS THIN MEN:

Fats Navarro (tpt); Leo Parker (alt, bar); Tadd Dameron (p); Gene Ramey (bs); Denzil Best (d)

New York City — January 16, 1947

- S3383 *Fat girl*
- S3384 *Ice greezes red*
- S3385 *Eb pob*
- S3386 *Goin' to Minton's*

FATS NAVARRO AND HIS BAND:

Fats Navarro (tpt); Ernie Henry (alt); Tadd Dameron (p); Dillon 'Curley' Russell (bs); Kenny Clarke (d); Kay Penton (vcl-1)

New York City — July 1947

- S3456 *The Tadd walk*
 - S3466 *A bop Carroll*
 - Gone with the wind-1*
 - That someone must be you-1*
- Realm M M52192 (25/11d.)

MEMORIAL, VOLUME 2:**EDDIE DAVIS AND HIS BEBOPPERS:**

Fats Navarro (tpt) Eddie 'Lockjaw' Davis (ten); Al Haig (p); Huey Long (g); Gene Ramey (bs); Denzil Best (d)

New York City — October 1946

- SS367 *Calling Dr. Jazz*
- S3368 *Fracture*
- S3370 *Stealin' trash*
- S3374 *Hollerin' and screamin'*

FATS NAVARRO AND HIS BAND:

Fats Navarro (tpt); Charlie Rouse (ten); Tadd Dameron (p); Nelson Boyd (bs); Art Blakey (d)

New York City — September 1947

- S3483 *Nostalgia*
- S3484 *Barry's bop*
- S3485 *Be bop romp*
- S3486 *Fats blows*

DEXTER GORDON AND HIS BOYS:

Fats Navarro (tpt); Dexter Gordon (ten); Tadd Dameron (p); Nelson Boyd (bs); Art Mardigan (d)

New York City — December 1947

- S3511 *Dexter's mood-1*
- S3512 *Dextrose*
- S3513 *Index*
- S3514 *Dexterity*

-1 Navarro does not play on this track

Realm M M52208 (25/11d.)

CHARLIE PARKER**MEMORIAL ALBUM, VOLUME 1:****CHARLIE PARKER'S BEBOPPERS:**

Miles Davis (tpt); Charlie Parker (alt); Dizzy Gillespie (p); Dillon 'Curley' Russell (bs); Max Roach (d)

New York City — November 26, 1945

- S5850-1 *Billie's bounce*
 - S5850-2 *Billie's bounce*
 - S5850-3 *Billie's bounce*
- Davis out

same session

- S5849-1 *Warming up a riff**
- Davis returns

same session

- S5850-4 *Billie's bounce*
- S5850-5 *Billie's bounce**
- S5851-1 *Now's the time*
- S5851-2 *Now's the time*
- S5851-3 *Now's the time*
- S5851-4 *Now's the time**

Argonne Thorton (Sadik Hakim) (p) replaces Gillespie

same session

- S5852-1 *Thriving on a riff*
- S5852-2 *Thriving on a riff*
- S5852-3 *Thriving on a riff **

Dizzy Gillespie (p) replaces Thornton; Davis out

same session

Meandering

Dizzy Gillespie (tpt, p); Thornton returns

same session

- S5853-1 *Ko-Ko*
- S5853-2 *Ko-Ko**

Realm M M52120 (25/11d.)

MEMORIAL ALBUM, VOLUME 2:**TINY GRIMES QUINTET:**

Charlie Parker (alt); Clyde Hart (p); Tiny Grimes (g); Jimmy Butts (bs); Harold 'Doc' West (d)

New York City — September 15, 1944

- S5710-1 *Tiny's tempo*
- S5710-2 *Tiny's tempo*
- S5710-3 *Tiny's tempo**
- S5713-1 *Red cross*
- S5713-2 *Red cross**

SLIM GAILLARD AND HIS ORCHESTRA:

Dizzy Gillespie (tpt); Charlie Parker (alt); Jack McVea (ten); Dodo Marmarosa (p); Slim Gaillard (g, vib, vcl); Tiny Brown (bs); Zutty Singleton (d)

Hollywood — December 1945

- 38 *Dizzy boogie*
- 39 *Flat foot floogie*
- 40 *Poppity pop*
- 41 *Slim's jam*

CHARLIE PARKER ALL STARS:

Miles Davis (tpt); Charlie Parker (alt); Bud Powell (p); Tommy Potter (bs); Max Roach

New York City — May 1947

- S3420-1 *Donna Lee*
- S3420-2 *Donna Lee*
- S3420-3 *Donna Lee*
- S3420-4 *Donna Lee**
- S3421-1 *Chasing the bird*
- S3421-2 *Chasing the bird*
- S3421-3 *Chasing the bird**

Realm M M52121 (25/11d.)

MEMORIAL ALBUM, VOLUME 3:**CHARLIE PARKER ALL STARS:**

Continuation of previous session

- S3422-1 *Cheryl*
- S3422-2 *Cheryl**
- S3423-1 *Buzzy*
- S3423-2 *Buzzy*
- S3423-3 *Buzzy*
- S3423-4 *Buzzy*
- S3423-5 *Buzzy**

MILES DAVIS ALL STARS:

Miles Davis (tpt); Charlie Parker (alt); John Lewis (p); Nelson Boyd (bs); Max Roach (d)

New York City — August 1947

- S3440-1 *Milestones**
- S3440-2 *Milestones*
- S3441-2 *Little Willie leaps*
- S3441-2 *Little Willie leaps*
- S3441-3 *Little Willie leaps**
- S3442-1 *Half Nelson*
- S3442-2 *Half Nelson**
- S3443-1 *Sippin' at Bell's*

S3443-2 *Sippin' at Bell's**

S3443-4 *Sippin' at Bell's*

Realm ® M52122 (25/11d.)

MEMORIAL ALBUM, VOLUME 4:

CHARLIE PARKER ALL STARS:

Miles Davis (tpt); Charlie Parker (alt); Duke Jordan (p); Tommy Potter (vs); Max Roach (d)

Detroit — December 1947[

D830-1 *Another hair-do*

D830-2 *Another hair-do*

D830-3 *Another hair-do**

D831-1 *Blue bird*

D831-3 *Blue bird**

D832-1 *Klaunstance*

D833-1 *Bird gets the worm*

D833-3 *Bird gets the worm**

John Lewis (p); Dillon 'Curley' Russell (bs); replaces Jordan and Potter

Los Angeles — September 1948

B900-1 *Barbados*

B900-2 *Barbados*

B900-3 *Barbados*

B900-4 *Barbados**

B900-5 *Ah-Leu-Cha*

B901-1 *Ah-Leu-Cha**

B902-1 *Constellation*

B902-2 *Constellation*

B902-3 *Constellation*

B902-4 *Constellation**

Realm ® M52123 (25/11d.)

MEMORIAL ALBUM, VOLUME 5:

CHARLIE PARKER ALL STARS:

Continuation of previous session

B903-1 *Parker's mood*

B903-2 *Parker's mood*

B903-3 *Parker's mood**

Los Angeles — c. September 1948

B908-1 *Perhaps*

B908-2 *Perhaps*

B908-3 *Perhaps*

B908-4 *Perhaps*

B908-5 *Perhaps*

B908-6 *Perhaps**

B909-1 *Marmaduke*

B909-2 *Marmaduke*

B909-3 *Marmaduke*

B909-4 *Marmaduke*

B909-5 *Marmaduke*

B909-6 *Marmaduke**

B910-1 *Steeplechase*

B911-1 *Merrygoround*

B911-2 *Merrygoround*

Realm ® M52131 (25/11d.)

Note:- Where several takes of a title are listed an asterisk denotes the original issue.

MEMORIAL ALBUM, VOLUME 6:

CHARLIE PARKER:

Charlie Parker (alt); unknown (ten); probably Al Haig (p); possibly Billy Bauer or Bill de Arango (g); probably Tommy Potter (bs); Max Roach (d)

c. 1949

There's a small hotel :: These foolish things :: Fine and dandy :: Hot house

Realm ® M52214 (25/11d.)

DJANGO REINHARDT

DJANGO:

Stephane Grappelly (vln); Django Reinhardt (solo g); Roger Chaput, Joseph Reinhardt (g); Louis Vola (bs)

Paris — December 1934

P77161 *Dinah*

P77162 *Tiger rag*

P77163 *Oh, lady be good*

P77164 *I saw stars*

Jerry Mengo (vcl-1) added

Paris — March 1935

P77241 *Sweet Sue, just you-1*

P77242 *Confessin'*

P77243 *The Continental-1*

Paris — May 1935

P77351 *Blue drag*

P77352 *Swanee river*

P77352 *The sunshine or your smile*

Realm ® M52213 (25/11d.)

SONNY TERRY AND BROWNIE McGHEE

BACK COUNTRY BLUES:

Brownie McGhee (vcl, g); Sonny Terry (hca); unknown (d)

New York City — 1954

SBM5100 *Bottom blues*

SBM5101 *Tell me, baby*

SBM5103 *Gone baby, gone*

Sittin' pretty

Brownie McGhee (vcl, g); Sticks McGhee (g)

New York City — c. 1955

SBM5517 *Diamond ring*

SBM5519 *So much trouble*

The way I feel

Dissatisfied blues

Brownie McGhee (vcl, g); Sonny Terry (hca); Ernest Hayes (p);

Mickey Baker (g); Leonard Gaskin (bs); Eugene Brookes (d)

New York City — October 1955

SBM6754 *When It's love time*

SBM6755 *I'd love to love you*

SBM6757 *My fault*

Love's a disease

Realm ® M52165 (25/11d.)

JOE TURNER

JOE TURNER SINGS THE BLUES, VOLUME 1:

JOE TURNER (vcl) acc PETE JOHNSON'S ALL STARS: Frank

Newton (tpt); Don Byas (ten); Pete Johnson (p); Leonard Ware

(g); Al Hall (bs); Harold 'Doc' West (d)

New York City — February 1, 1945

NSC33 *S.K. blues, Part 1*

NSC34 *S.K. blues, Part 2*

NSC35 *Johnson and Turner blues*

NSC36 *Watch that jive*

JOE TURNER (vcl) acc BILLY MOORE'S LUCKY SEVEN BAND:

Warren Brocken (tpt); Billy Moore; Lloyd Harrison (ten); Al

Williams (p); Teddy Bunn (g); John Henry (bs); Alroy Kidd (d)

Los Angeles — January 23, 1946

NSC143 *Play boy blues*

NSC144 *I got love for sale*

Russell Jacquet (tpt); Lou Simon (ten); Camille Howard (p);

Walter Murden (d) replace Brocken, Harrison, Williams and Kidd

Los Angeles — January 30, 1946

NSC145 *Sunday mornin' blues*

NSC146 *Mad blues*

JOE TURNER (vcl) acc unknown tpt; ten; pg; g; bs; d

Chicago — early 1947

NSC311 *Nobody in mind*

NSC312 *Lucille, Lucille*

NSC313 *Rocks in my bed*

Careless love

Realm ® M52207 (25/11d.)

JOE TURNER SINGS THE BLUES, VOLUME 2:

JOE TURNER (vcl) acc Charles Gray (tpt); Riley Hampton (alt);

Otis Finch (ten); Ellsworth Liggett (p); Ellsworth Perkins (g);

Robert Moore (bs); James Adams (d)

Chicago — October 11, 1946

NSC172 *I'm still in the dark*

NSC173 *Miss Brown blues*

NSC174 *Sally Zu Zazz*

NSC175 *Rock of Gibraltar blues*

Chicago — October 12, 1946

NSC177 *That's when it really hurts*

NSC178 *I'm in sharp when I hit the coast*

NSC179 *Ooh wee baby blues*

Milk and butter blues

JOE TURNER (vcl) acc unknown tpt; ten; Ellsworth Liggett(p);
unknown g; bs; d

Chicago — late 1947

NSC338 *Whistle stop blues*

NSC339 *Hollywood bed*

NSC340 *Howlin' winds*

Last goodbye blues

Realm M M52229 (25/11d.)

THE RE-APPEARANCE of these LPs, all but two derived from the U.S. Savoy catalogue, is welcome, and with the whole series to be reinstated over a period of time one hopes that there may be some new additions from this source. All have been repackaged — in record company parlance this means that the sleeve has been redesigned — generally for the good it must be said, though in the case of the two Joe Turner LPs we find a cover almost equal to that of the Bukka White for hideousness. Teeth are once more displayed on this and it would be interesting to know if the designer is the same as was responsible for the White monstrosity. My own theory is that there lurks somewhere in the C.B.S. design department an individual who suffers from an obsessive fear of visiting his or her dentist!

The W.C. Handy LP is one of the two non-Savoy items — the other is the Reinhardt — and it is now recognised as one of Armstrong's outstanding achievements of the post-1947 period. A respect for Handy, the challenge of material that was not featured in the nightly performances of the All Stars, and in George Avakian a knowledgeable a-and-r man, led Armstrong to dig into his resources and eschew the routine. His singing is superb throughout but more important is the fact that he plays with a freshness and vigour rare in his later years. There are quite beautiful solos on most tracks, those on *Yellow dog*, *Aunt Hagar's*, *Hesitating* and above all, *Beale Street*, being truly memorable. After Armstrong the best solos are by Bigard and Kyle, the former sounding a great deal less disinterested than was usually the case at this period. Even the fact that Velma Middleton sings on four tracks — in fairness it must be said that she tried hard — and that Trummy Young for most of the time indulges in grotesque roaring, cannot seriously lessen the worth of this record. Recording is excellent, playing time at 57 minutes almost unique on a jazz LP.

It is difficult to be wholly fair to Charlie Byrd, for he is a musician of undeniable technical facility who has worked hard to attain a high degree of proficiency on his instrument. On this LP the five unaccompanied solos are pleasant and include imaginative touches, yet in the last resort they are a little too decorous and once having heard them it is hard to recall anything that is really striking.

Chuck and *Homage* have reasonable tenor solos by Newson, whose style owes much to Zoot Sims, but Byrd's contributions again fail to make much impact. It is not just a question of Byrd being an unconvincing jazz performer, though this is a fact, but that his records in general are so entirely nebulous. This record offers 31½ minutes of well recorded pleasant but at base rather empty music. Since these Savoy sessions were recorded Erroll Garner has made very great advances as an artist. The familiar touches are all present — the considerable swing, the lagging beat, the full chording, and the occasional romanticism — but the three minute time limitation allows Garner no real chance to develop his solos and compared with the best of his later work they sound rather formal. There are some worthwhile tracks, *Somebody loves me*, *Stompin' at the Savoy*, *I'm confessin'* and *Until the real thing* having an infectious beat and numerous imaginative ideas, and if one were hearing Garner for the first time this would be a recommendable record. However, with the knowledge of so many later and very much better performances on LP, this can be overlooked by any but the most fanatical of Garner admirers. Playing time is 41 minutes, recording rather poor by current standards.



'LIVIN' With The Blues' is a good though not great anthology. Wylie, Edwards, Weaver and

McTell were recorded in Atlanta around 1949, the latter two offering some of the best music on the LP. McTell's guitar playing and his fine narrative vocal on *A to Z* proves yet again what a superb artist he was, while Weaver's *She don't* is almost as good. These two are present on Edward's rhythmic *Gotta get* — better known as *Bottle it up and go* — which is a fine dance type performance that makes a good contrast to the more introspective *You're gonna weep* by Wylie, an artist who shows occasional similarities to Hooker. Sunnyland Slim's *Orphan boy* is superior to much of this artist's recorded output, with good vocal and a vibrato-laden tenor in the supporting group, and Slim is heard again playing effective rolling piano behind St. Louis Jimmy's rather ordinary vocal on *Trying to change*. Memphis Minnie's *Kidman* has some excellent forceful singing and good piano support, while McGhee's *Living* and Hooker's *When my wife* are satisfactory examples of these artists. Of the three remaining tracks, Hughes's *I'm a country boy* is suggestive of an earlier Rural blues tradition, with good vocal and rhythmic harmonica work, McMillan's *Poor little angel* presents reflective singing and very fine guitar playing, and Papa Lightfoot's *That mean* has an average vocal but worthwhile harmonica and guitar. 35½ minutes of interesting and varied blues, well worth obtaining. Fats Navarro was, in my opinion, the greatest trumpeter of the bop era. He possessed a wonderful full tone and the finest of his solos had a quality of grandeur absent from the work of most of his contemporaries. It is unfortunate that many of his recording sessions were made in the company of inferior musicians, though he himself seemed not to be affected as a result. The sleeve note on volume one of this set erroneously states that additional solos have been spliced in on some tracks, whereas in fact through the problems of disc recording, passages were lost on the first three titles.

On the Be-Bop Boys session Navarro takes the first trumpet solo, Dorham the second, the latter performing more than creditably in a style that seems here to be strongly influenced by his partner. There are various indifferent solos by Lane and De Verteuil and reasonable ones by Stitt, but Navarro is in splendid form throughout, creating exciting fluent solos, that on *Everything's cool* combining lyricism with strength. He is matched on *Boppin'* and *Fat boy* by Bud Powell, whose contributions are beautifully poised and inventive. The session of January 16, 1947 has a nice melodic solo from Dameron on *Ebpob*, some grotesque ones from Leo Parker on all titles, and more outstanding Navarro. *Ice freezes* has one of his finest solos — the theme is based on the chord sequence of *Indiana* — which displays both his excellent tone and remarkable breath control, but the fiery introduction and bravura solo on *Goin'* runs it close. *Gone* and *That someone* are vocal features for Kay Penton, a pleasant if unremarkable singer who receives wistful muted support from Navarro on the latter title, but *The Tadd* and *A Bop* are clearly superior as vehicles for further brilliant solos from the leader. Volume two starts with the best overall session of the two LP set, for Charlie Rouse contributes agreeable solos on three titles and there is some superb drumming throughout by Blakey. Navarro's technical fluency is in evidence on *Barry's bop*, particularly his control in the upper register, but well as he plays on all titles it is the reflective *Nostalgia* that is most impressive. The tune is based on *Out of nowhere* and the only soloist is Navarro who plays with a wistfulness and lyrical quality that is reminiscent of his wonderful *Stop* recording. The Eddie Davis session is very different and offers light-hearted music in the Harlem jump style. Davis roars along merrily, foregoing coherence on more than on occasion, but Navarro enters into the spirit of the date and meets Davis on his own ground with some untypical smears on *Hollerin'*. *Calling* has a finely poised Navarro solo that in this context was a remarkable achievement. The Gordon date finds Navarro less to the fore, but he contrives a particularly lyrical solo on *Dextrose* and an easy-paced relaxed chorus on *Index*. Gordon's feature, *Dexter's mood*, is a good ballad solo, and elsewhere he produces attractive, strongly Young-influenced work that has its own validity. Recording is reasonable, playing time 39½ and 35½ minutes respect-

ively. Though one might have wished that Navarro was heard with musicians whose stature was equal to his own, these are still vitally important LPs for anyone concerned with the development of modern jazz, though I would suggest that Navarro was an artist of such stature that stylistic considerations should be irrelevant to the enjoyment of his music.

I WAS RECENTLY astonished when a collector who is committed in the main to the avant-garde told me that he found it hard to enjoy Charlie Parker because he considered his playing too bland. Recalling the initial reaction to Parker's work, with words like neurotic and hysterical bandied about, one wonders if in twenty years time there will those who cannot listen to Albert Ayler with enjoyment because they find his solos too smooth. The first five LPs are, of course, the famous Parker Savoy recordings presented in chronological sequence or almost — take 4 of *Now's the time* follows take 1 of *Buzzy* on M52122, preceding takes 2 and 3 of the latter title. This is not mentioned on the sleeve or label as it is the result of a production error.

Faced with the volume and importance of the music on this set one can but make a few generalised comments in a brief review space, and in any case it is unlikely that readers of this magazine would be unaware of its significance. This set can probably rank with the Armstrong Hot Five and Hot Seven LPs in importance, presenting as it does so many remarkable insights into Parker's music. There are collectors who have told me that they consider it unnecessary to have so many takes of each title, particularly when quite a few are fragmentary, but while this would be a valid objection with, for example, a highly scored big band performance, in this instance it does not seem so, for the remarkable fact is that Parker could improvise quite different solos on alternative takes or, just as interesting, we can hear how he developed and refined a solo for the final take.

When Max Harrison reviewed the initial appearance of these titles, in our July 1958 issue, he regretted the fact that Miles Davis soloed after Parker as a rule, and in this view I fully concur. Davis was very far from the musician that he subsequently became and most of his work on this set is pretty mediocre. Fortunately Bud Powell is generally in excellent form and there is the wonderfully sympathetic drumming of Max Roach to admire, in addition to which the admirable Duke Jordan is particularly good on the various takes of *Blue bird* and *Bird gets the worm*.

I think it is now generally accepted that amongst Parker's finest solos are the following from this set *Ko Ko* (take 2), *Cheryl* (take 2), *Another hair-do* (take 3), *Blue bird* (take 3), *Bird gets the worm* (takes 1 and 3), *Barbados* (take 4), *Ah-leu-cha* (take 2), *Constellation* (all takes) and *Parker's mood* (take 3) — though everyone can add others that are their personal favourites. There should really be no need to remark that this is one of the great sets of recorded jazz, but if anyone is still sceptical I would suggest Volume 4 (M52123) as offering the most consistently brilliant music while mainstream followers still suspicious of Parker might try Volume 2 (M52121), less because it is particularly outstanding as against the others than for the fact that it offers Parker playing in the company of swing era stylists.

Volume 6 is another matter. It lasts for a mere thirty minutes and was poorly recorded on some type of home unit. It has been said that it was recorded at a party, but from the background noise it is as likely to have been done in a club. *There's a small* and *These* have been extended by tape doctoring which repeats parts of the solos by the tenor player and Parker respectively. Parker's best solo is on *Hot house* and there are some nice twists to the melody during his solo on *These*, but there is really nothing here to put alongside his finest recordings. The identify of the tenor player has puzzled discographers for years and my own guesses in order are Budd Johnson or Jimmy Forrest. This is an LP essential only to readers who want to have a complete Parker collection.

I find most jazz guitarists boring. It might sound heretical, but I sometimes think that the worst influence of all has been Charlie Christian, despite his own brilliance. For well over two decades now we have had to endure innumerable anonymous sounding guitarists attempting to play horn-like lines on their instruments,

to the detriment of their music and our listening. A comparison of current jazz guitarists with their counterparts in the blues field makes it obvious that the latter draw more fully upon the resources of the guitar, as indeed has been the case all along. Apart from a couple of attractive LPs by Al Casey the post-war history of jazz guitar records is one of almost unrelieved monotony, and one consequence is that as the years go by the full stature of Django Reinhardt becomes more marked. Yet there are collectors who query whether Reinhardt was really a jazz musician, their chief criticism being that he could not play blues very well. This may be true but I can only comment that unlike Reinhardt most of the highly touted guitarists of the past few years seem incapable of playing *anything* very well, unless dexterity is to be considered a virtue in itself.

The titles on the Reinhardt LP come from the very first sessions that he made with Grappelly. The latter has come in for more than his fair share of criticism over the years, yet while he had his weaknesses he is not nearly as poor a soloist as some have claimed. He does tend to become sentimental at times — as on *Sunshine of your smile* on this LP — but generally he plays with sufficient astringency to avoid this pitfall, and on such tracks as *Dinah*, *Continental* and *Tiger rag* his solos are not without interest. The rhythm section chugs along woodenly, and Mengo's vocals on two tracks are dire, but once Reinhardt starts his dazzling solos the weaknesses are forgotten. He plays with stunning technique and imagination on these performances, his choruses on *Dinah*, *Confessin'*, *I saw*, *Blue* and *The sunshine* being truly superb. It is a pity that there are only ten tracks on the record, providing a short playing time of 29½ minutes, but the transfers have been done well and Reinhardt's playing is so fine that there can be no hesitation in recommending the LP for his contributions.

We have all become a little blase about Terry and McGhee and their cause has not been helped by a surfeit of recordings, yet what is perhaps most surprising in view of their long years of working in folk clubs is that they have not entirely succumbed to commercial pressures. One McGhee-Terry LP tends to be much like another and the present one is typical without offering anything particularly new, though the variations in line-up help to give it variety. Four tracks find McGhee without Terry, the best being *Diamond ring* an adaptation of the *Frankie and Johnnie* theme — and the low-keyed, confidential *The way I feel*. The titles by the duo and a remarkably self effacing drummer are pleasant enough, the jivy *Sittin' pretty* (*Sittin' on top of the world*) and *Bottom* coming off better than the slower numbers, Terry playing fine harmonica on the latter. The other tracks feature a tight little group that provides a good rocking beat, with Terry coming to the fore to advantage on *When it's*. McGhee and Terry may not be a great blues artists but they invariably maintain reasonable standards, and anyone who wants a representative example of their work will find the present satisfactory enough. Recording good, playing time 34½ minutes.

A very different blues singer is Joe Turner, for his roots are in the jazz era of Kansas City. On the first of his two volumes the titles with Newton and Byas are outstanding. *Johnson* and *Watch* in particular having some beautiful trumpet work. The 1946 tracks have a typical West Coast blues backing of the period, a blend of jazz and r-and-b, Teddy Bunn taking a recognisable solo on *Play boy*. *Nobody* and *Lucille* are not aided by the presence of a jangle piano, but on the whole the riff based backings are reasonable and a big toned tenor player has some good spots. On volume two, eight titles have a worthwhile supporting group, the solos by the alto player — his style a blend of Benny Carter and Willie Smith — and pianist being excellent. The tenor player is a conventional r-and-b musician, but as a whole the group backs Turner with great gusto and generate a fine swing on such numbers as *Sally* and *I'm in sharp*. The Chicago session features fine piano and nice trumpet, *Hollywood* being a slight variant of *Cherry red*. Throughout both LPs Turner's singing is outstanding, his shouted, powerful vocals having an impressive rhythmic strength. His phrasing and ability to swing are clearly derived from the jazz world and at times he uses repetitive phrases as an equivalent of an instrumental riff. Both LPs have

good recording, the playing times being 34½ and 36 minutes, and while the first is to be slightly preferred for the titles with Newton Byas and Johnson, there is really very little to choose between them. I have given the personnels as listed on the sleeves but there is some confusion surrounding these sessions, it having been stated that Albert Ammons is present on many titles and that

Buddy Tate and Earle Warren are on the October 11 and 12, 1946 dates. The latter identifications are not convincing, but I am fairly certain that it is indeed Ammons on the first four titles if not on all. In *Jazz Records 1942-1962* Jorgen Grunnet Jepsen lists this session as by a mainly unidentified group including Albert Ammons and Red Saunders, and this seems the most likely suggestion.

ALBERT MCCARTHY

AFTER HOUR BLUES 1949

ST. LOUIS JIMMY (vcl) acc unknown p; g; bs; d
Chicago — April 19, 1949

Hard work boogie :: Your evil ways :: I sit up all night :: State Street blues-1

-1 no vocal on this track

SUNNYLAND SLIM (vcl, p) acc unknown ten; g; bs; d
Chicago — probably July 19, 1949

When I was young (Shake it baby) — Takes 1 and 2

EURREAL "LITTLE BROTHER" MONTGOMERY (p, vcl)
Grafton, Wis — September 1930

L-501 Vicksburg blues

L-502 No special rider

p only

Vicksburg blues :: A and B blues :: After hours blues ::

Little brother stomp

Biograph Ⓜ BLP-12010 (52/9d.)

DETAILS FOR this album are as given on the sleeve but it would appear from aural evidence

that the "unknown pianist" on the St. Louis Jimmy tracks is Sunnyland Slim; that *State Street blues* should really be under Sunnyland's name as it does not feature St. Louis Jimmy; and that all the previously unissued items were in fact recorded at the one session on April 19, 1949. As a composer of blues St. Louis Jimmy is exceptional — he has written many which has passed, like *Going down slow*, into the blues tradition, and others for singers like Muddy Waters. From the lyric point of view these items are interesting, but unfortunately his voice is grating and unmusical. With a rather mechanical accompaniment they are disappointing. Sunnyland Slim's two takes of *When I was young* are very similar and the little group works out its routine. Far better are the Montgomery tracks, though the first two suffer from over-familiarity. *After hour* is part *Pinetop's boogie*, part *Dirty dozens*; the well-played *Stomp* has echoes of Morton. By no means an essential release.

PAUL OLIVER

CHRIS BARBER

BATTERSEA RAIN DANCE:

Pat Halcox (tpt); Chris Barber (tbn); Ian Wheeler (alt, hca); John Crocker (alt); John Slaughter (g); Stu Morrison (bj); Jackie Flavelle (bs-g); Graham Burbidge (d)

London — c. early 1969

Battersea rain dance :: Snag it :: Revival 69 :: People get ready-1 :: Cat call-2 :: Sleepy John :: Better get it in your soul :: Dooji, wooji :: I think it's going to rain today :: Mercy, mercy, mercy :: Dancy, dancy

1-vcl by Halcox, Barber, Wheeler, Morrison and Otilie Patterson;
-2 Brian Auger (org) added

Marmalade 608 009 (37/6d.)

OUTSIDE the realm of modernism the dilemma of the British jazz musician is a very real one,

with a shrinking audience and a national tradition of miserable third rate dixieland. Chris Barber, whose band was always rather better than the critics gave credit for, has moved via the blues, in which he has always shown a strong interest, into the field of neo-pop. Although not containing music of any great imagination this is, one feels, a superior album in the pop field. So far as any jazz content is concerned the only outstanding feature is the trumpet work of Pat Halcox, although the trombonist, the altoists and the guitarist have their moments. The rhythm section is not distinguished. Rather surprisingly the transformation of Oliver's *Snag it* into

present day terms is done without violating the spirit of the original. The multi-recording and other engineering gimmicks keep well this side of outrageous.

EDDIE LAMBERT

RAY CHARLES

I'M ALL YOURS BABY:

Ray Charles (vcl, p-1) acc unknown studio orchestra including strings

Los Angeles — probably early 1969

Yours :: I didn't know what time it was-1 :: Love is here to stay-1 :: Memories of you :: Till the end of time :: I had the craziest dream-1 :: Someday-1 :: Indian love call :: I dream of you (More than you dream I do) :: Gloomy Sunday

Stateside SSL Ⓜ SL10281 (37/6d.)

WHEREAS it is inconceivable to me that any reader of this magazine whatever his jazz affilia-

tions, can really be without the Bukka White lp, it is no less impossible to imagine how any reader of this magazine could want to buy this album. The cover picture is of Ray Charles making it with an embarrassed looking white girl: so right. Here's Ray Charles making it with the whites and we know why she's embarrassed; *she's* heard the record. That really is *Yours* (till the stars lose their glory) and those must be the Mantovani sweeping strings (Third Fifteen). *Gloomy Sunday*. . . you can say *that* again.

PAUL OLIVER

KENNY COX

INTRODUCING KENNY COX AND THE CONTEMPORARY JAZZ QUINTET:

Charles Moore (tpt); Leon Henderson (ten); Kenny Cox (p); Ron Brooks (bs) Danny Spencer (d)

Detroit — c. October 1968

Mystique :: You :: Trance dance :: Eclipse :: Number four :: Diahnn

Blue Note BST84302 (47/5d.)

"BLUE NOTE has found five new talents that will, beyond any reasonable doubt, make as firm

a mark in jazz territory as did the Miles Davis Quintet a decade ago", it says here on the sleeve. Leonard Feather has, beyond any reasonable doubt, got to be joking, and I hope he takes the joke to its logical conclusion by playing the record to Miles in a "Blind-fold Test". Meanwhile, rather than befouling their talent-finding reputation, Blue Note might more successfully rehabilitate their former stars Rollins and Blakey, who haven't recorded a note in three years, or sign Max and Dizzy, neither of whom has had a record contract for almost as long. Or do we have to wait till they're all taxi-drivers or post-office clerks, and willing to work for union scale?

The present album, leaving aside the rather thin sound quality and nasty piano, suffers from faults which may be insignificant singly but are fatal in combination; the group is derivative, directionless and (apologies to Cole Porter!) de-ragged. The raggedness might, of course, be explained by lack of experience, but these men play together regularly and they're not especially young — the pianist was born only four months after me, but neither he nor the others scare me to death like some much younger performers. Given that the music is entirely based on recent Miles Davis, I wish that Mark Gardner or someone would send Blue Note a tape of England's prize-winning Alan Skidmore Quintet, who are also into this bag but really *into it*. The front-line here tried hard, with Moore sounding very promising but very uneven, and Joe Henderson's brother coming commendably close to current Wayne Shorter; but they receive little help from

a rhythm section often completely out of its depth. I can't imagine why this record is under Cox's name (the group usually works around Detroit just as "The Contemporary Jazz Quintet") for he is easily the weakest performer, losing the beat more than once and floundering helplessly among the chord-changes on *Eclipse*. The album is produced by Duke Pearson.

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

DUKE ELLINGTON

IN HARLEM:

THE WASHINGTONIANS:

Bubber Miley (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwicke (alt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Sonny Creer (d)

New York City — November, 1924

T2005-2 *Choo choo*

T2006-2 *Rainy nights*

Pike Davis (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwicke (alt); Prince Robinson (ten, clt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Bass Edwards (tu)

New York City — September, 1925

106250 *I'm gonna hang around my sugar*

106251 *Trombone blues*

Harry Cooper, Leroy Rutledge (tpt); Charlie Irvis (tbn); Otto Hardwicke (alt, bar); Don Redman (alt, clt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Bass Edwards (tu); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — March 1926

106729 *Georgia grind*

106730 *Parlor social stomp*

X58-A *If you can't hold the man you love*

Jimmy Harrison (tbn, vcl); Prince Robinson (ten, clt); George Thomas (ten) added

New York City — April 1st, 1926

DUKE ELLINGTON AND HIS WASHINGTONIANS:

Bubber Miley, Charlie Johnson (tpt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Otto Hardwicke (alt, bar); Prince Robinson (ten, clt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Bass Edwards (tu); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — June 21, 1926

X190-A *Animal crackers*

X191-A *Li'l Farina*

THE WASHINGTONIANS:

Bubber Miley, Arthur Whetsol (tpt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Johnny Hodges (alt, sop); Barney Bigard (clt, ten); Harry Carney (bar, alt, clt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Wellman Braud (bs); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — late October 1928

108446-1 *The mooche*

108446-2 *The mooche*

THE WHOOPEE MAKERS:

Freddy Jenkins (tpt); for Miley

New York City — early December, 1928

108533-3 *Misty mornin'*

OZIE WARE ACCOMPANIED BY WHOOPEE MAKERS:

Arthur Whetsol (tpt); Joe Nanton (tbn); Barney Bigard (clt); Duke Ellington (p); Fred Guy (bj); Wellman Braud (bs); Sonny Greer (d)

New York City — December 1928

3532-B *Hit me in the nose blues*

THE WASHINGTONIANS:

as for late October 1928 session but Cootie Williams, Freddy Jenkins (tpt) for Miley

New York City — c. August 1929

4064-B *Saturday night function*

Jazz Panorama LP-17

JAZZ PANORAMA'S latest excursion into Ellington archeology offers a good selection of 'pre-

historic' Duke plus five items from his first classic period. Ellington's early musical environment was well removed from the centres of jazz activity and the music on the 1924-26 tracks is typical New York 'hot music' of the period. Highly dated dance band ingredients rub shoulders with half-digested echoes of King Oliver; overall the results are of mainly historical interest. Miley's solos on the two sessions on which he is present are much the best music here, although Ellington's erratic stride piano and Hardwick's corny alto and baritone work have a certain period charm. Charlie Irvis



STORYVILLE

Whatever has proved to be 'special' about the Storyville-Special series derives, as one pundit pondered, from the quality of the artists involved. The list below proves the ponderer's point:

616 005
WELDON 'JUKE BOY' BONNER
The Louisiana Blues

616 008
BIG BILL BROONZY
Black, Brown & White

616 009
THE MIDNIGHT SPECIAL
Folk Classics

616 011
BIG JOE WILLIAMS
Don't You Leave Me Here

671 209
GEORGE LEWIS & PAPA BUE'S
Viking Jazzband

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gives little indication of the important part Duke and others have attributed to him in the band's development, while the solos of Pike-Davis, Don Redman and the rest simply show how far northern musicians of the period were from the jazz idiom. The historical importance of these items does, I feel, outweigh their thin musical content for anyone concerned with early Ellington or with the development of jazz in New York. Some of this material has been unavailable in recent years and its re-appearance is most welcome. Considering the age and the origin of the records the sound quality is good, with some tracks notably superior to previous microgroove issues.

The 1928-29 items are a different proposition with two excellent takes of *The mooche*, the best of the three versions of *Misty mornin'*, and a fine *Saturday night function*. On this last title Bigard, Whetsol and Nanton are outstanding as they are in their accompaniment to Ozie Ware in one of the rare examples of the Ellingtonians as blues accompanists. Overall this is another worthy album for the Ellington collector.

EDDIE LAMBERT

GEORGIA GUITAR (1927-1938)

SYLVESTER WEAVER (vcl, g)

New York City — August 31, 1927

81402-B *Penitentiary bound blues*

New York City — November 27, 1927

81878-A *Devil blues*

New York City — November 30, 1927

81901-A *Black spider blues*

BARBECUE BOB (vcl, g)

Atlanta — April 11, 1929

148251-2 *It just won't hay*

148252-2 *It's just too bad*

Atlanta — October 30, 1929

149321-2 *Yo yo blues*

CURLEY WEAVER (vcl, g)

New York City — January 16, 1933

12909-1 *No no blues*

FRED McMULLEN (vcl, g); Curley Weaver (vcl, g)

New York City — January 18, 1933

12930-1 *Poor stranger blues*

BUDDY MOSS (vcl, g); unknown g - 1; Joshua White (g -2)

New York City — January 17, 1933

12926-1 *Cold country blues -1*

New York City — August 21, 1935

17983-1 *My baby won't pay me no mind*

New York City — August 23, 1935

18002-1 *Stop hanging around -2*

TAMPA RED (vcl, g)

Chicago — March 23, 1934

CP-1044-1 *Sugar mama blues No.2*

CP-1045-1 *Black angel blues*

BLIND WILLIE McTELL

New York City — September 14, 1933

14010-1 *It's a good little thing*

KOKOMO ARNOLD (vcl, g); unknown p

New York City — May 12, 1938

63751 *Goin down in Galilee*

63755 *Something's hot*

Kokomo ® K-1004

GEORGIA IS getting better served by reissues now,

now, as it should, for a large number of

important recordings were made by Georgia singers. I'm not sure that Sylvester Weaver is actually a Georgia singer — he lived for some years in Kentucky — and though his guitar playing seems to fall into this context well enough his voice is very light and colourless. Of the three titles, *Penitentiary* is in my view the best; though the words of all of them are interesting, there's more quality in his singing here. Tampa Red, whose plaintive singing and whining guitar were always distinctive, clearly appealed to Georgia singers — the McMullen track is a straight imitation of Tampa's lyrics, harmonising and guitar. *No no blues* on a somewhat similar theme is a later variant by Curley Weaver of his recording on Kokomo K1001, slower and with falsetto singing, different again from

Barbecue Bob's *Yo yo blues*, an early version of this traditional regional theme. Bob's richer voice and great authority come over on this as on *It just won't hay*, which is Tampa Red's *Tight like that* virtually, though they may stem from a common source. The selection in fact reveals Tampa Red's relationship to Georgia singers rather surprisingly — for instance, the guitar solo on Blind Willie McTell's *It's a good little thing* is closely related to the Hokum Boy's *Selling that stuff* on which Tampa played guitar. A penchant for this kind of song is common to many of the singers. The two Kokomo Arnold items are unusual in being songs rather than his standard blues, and his playing gets close to that on the Gitfiddle Jim sides. Back to the basic blues with Buddy Moss, fine playing against a grainy vocal. He's quite active in Atlanta still — will we ever hear him like he was on *Cold country blues* I wonder? A valuable collection from Huyton and Griffiths and nicely dubbed.

PAUL OLIVER

CHICO HAMILTON

THE BEST OF CHICO HAMILTON:

Charles Lloyd (ten-1, f-2); Gabor Szabo (g); Albert Stinson (bs); Chico Hamilton (d)

New York City—early 1964

Forest flower—Sunrise/Forest flower—Sunset-1

Jimmy Woods (ten); Willie Bobo (perc) added

New York City — March 15, 1965

Chic chic Chico-2

Gabor Szabo (g); Albert Stinson (bs); Chico Hamilton (d); Willie Bobo, Victor Pantoja (perc)

New York City — late 1965

People :: Conquistadores

Ron Carter (bs) replaces Stinson

New York City — May 2, 1966

Who can I turn to :: Evil eye

Larry Coryell (g); Ernie Hayes (org); Richard Davis (bs); Chico Hamilton (d)

New York City — late 1966

Larry of Arabia.

Impulse SIPL (® MIPL)517 (37/5d.)

ALL THE sleeve gives by way of personnel is

"featuring Gabor Szabo, Charles Lloyd, Ron

Carter, *Charlie Mariano, Jerome Richardson, Richard Davis, Larry Coryell*" (my italics). Still, there's nothing like a bit of exaggeration for selling records! No one is heard here at their best, except, surprisingly, Larry Coryell, and I am amazed that the "dealer" LP, with Coryell and a brief spot of Archie Shepp playing R-and-R piano, wasn't issued locally — it would have been very hip if Impulse had put it out two years ago. This compilation, however, suffers from a surfeit of simplistic Szabo... My God, I wonder, who's had to review "The Best of Gabor Szabo"?! Perhaps it's time they started doing "The Best Of 'The Best Of'"

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

BILLIE HOLIDAY

THE VOICE OF JAZZ:

Harry Edison (tpt); Willie Smith (alt); Bobby Tucker (p); Barney Kessel (g); Red Callender (bs); Chico Hamilton (d); Billie Holiday (vcl)

Los Angeles — September 3, 1954

I thought about you-1 :: Love me or leave me :: Too marvellous for words :: Stormy blues

Harry Edison (tpt); Benny Carter (alt); Jimmy Rowles (p); Barney Kessel (g); John Simmons (bs); Larry Bunker (d); Billie Holiday (vcl)

Los Angeles — August 22 to 25, 1955

Please don't talk about me when I'm gone :: Prelude to a kiss :: I hadn't anyone 'till you-1 :: I gotta right to sing the blues :: When your lover has gone :: What's new :: Everything I have is yours

1-omit Edison and Carter

Charlie Shavers (tpt); Tony Scott (clt, arr); Paul Quinichette (ten) (ten); Wynton Kelly (p); Kenny Burrell (g); Aaron Bell (bs); Lennie McBrowne (d); Billie Holiday (vcl)

New York City — June 6 and 7, 1956

Trav'lin' light :: Strange fruit :: Some other spring :: God bless the child :: I must have that man :: Good morning heartache :: No good man

Billie Holiday (vcl) acc Mal Waldron (p); Joe Benjamin (bs); Jo Jones (d)

Newport Jazz Festival, Rhode Island — July 6, 1957

Nice work if you can get it :: Willow weep for me :: My man :: Lover come back to me :: Lady sings the blues :: What a little moonlight can do

Verve ① VSP-37/38 (37/5d.)

BILLIE HOLIDAY'S later recordings assume an increasing significance as time goes by. The technical flaws seem less important now and the superb art of her later years assumes a greater expressive potency. At times in these years the singer's physical condition was such that her music hovered on the point of utter collapse. This it does on the 1957 Newport concert recordings where Billie sounds unhappy and unrelaxed, and her singing offers only the barest skeleton of style. By contrast the 1955 session with Edison and Carter is wholly successful, with Billie at her most eloquent and expressive. I fancy that *Please don't talk about me* and *I gotta right to sing the blues* must be reckoned among her greatest recordings. Benny Carter plays three superlative solos, that on *Prelude to a kiss* being an authentic masterpiece, comparable with any ballad solo in jazz. The rhythm section is ideal, with both Rowles and Kessel also contributing worthy solos, while Harry Edison is heard at his best both here and on the 1954 items. The 1956 date has a rather messy accompanying group, but the stogy, bravura passages by Charle Shavers serve to set off the grimness of this version of *Strange fruit*, which is greater than the Commodore in my view. One could go on selecting highlights from these sessions, for even the lesser tracks have singing of perfect rhythmic poise and timing with imaginative use of vibrato and perfect selection of melodic variations. It is unfortunate that the Newport *Nice work if you can get it* is used instead of the superb one from the 1955 Edison/Carter date. But perhaps Alun Morgan and John Snell will give us a second selection of Billie Holiday's Clef material including that particular gem. Here they offer an uneven album but apart from the mediocre Newport titles there is hardly a dull track and the collection does include some real classics.

EDDIE LAMBERT

STAN KENTON

STAN KENTON CONDUCTS THE JAZZ COMPOSITIONS OF DEE BARTON:

Mike Price, Jim Kartchner, Carl Leach, John Madrid, Jay Daversa (tpt); Dick Shearer, Tom Whittaker, Tom Senff (tbn); Jim Amlotte (bs-tbn); Graham Ellis (tu); Ray Reed (alt, fl-1); Mike Altschul, Kim Richmond (ten); Mike Vaccaro (bar); Earle Dumler (bar, bs-sax); Stan Kenton (p-2, ldr); Don Bagley (bs); Dee Barton (d, arr)

Los Angeles — 1968

Man :: Lonely boy :: The singing oyster-2 :: Dilemma :: Three thoughts :: A new day :: Woman-1

Capitol ST ① T)2932 (37/5d.)

AS WE ALL know from painful experience, a reviewer who is the victim of his prejudices is worse than useless, and so I have made strenuous efforts to approach this as a showcase for Dee Barton (on a par with the recent Dank-worth-sponsors-Ken-Wheeler LP). If I had been successful in ignoring the presence of Kenton, whose playing contribution is negligible, I would have said that this relatively unknown composer (*Waltz of the prophets* etc) has a good grasp of standard arranging techniques and varies his moods nicely, but that it all seems a bit soulless. Despite one or two original ideas, he doesn't exactly have a flair for melody, and neither do the two soloists Daversa and Reed; what bite there is comes from the brass but, since Barton has tried to do more than just pander to the ensemble, the whole thing falls a bit flat. There is no such thing as a typical Kenton record and, although it suffers from some of the faults of the genre, this one has a few saving graces. On the other hand, Ken Wheeler has a touch of genius, and what Dee Barton was aiming at is achieved on "Windmill Tilter" (Fontana STL5494).

BRIAN PRIESTLEY

Polydor

The rebirth of the big band, viz, the Clarke-Boland crew, continues to excite critics and collectors who are smitten, too, by the 25s Jazz Masters series. Current essentials include:

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HUDDIE LEDBETTER

LEADBELLY — IN THE EVENING WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN:

Huddie Ledbetter (vcl, g)

New York City — January 1942

SC104 *Old Riley*

Add Sonny Terry (hca)

New York City — summer 1943

SC258 *On a Monday*

SC260 *How long blues*

SC263 *Good morning blues*

omit Terry

New York City — late 1943

SC270 *Cow cow yicky yicky yea/Out on the Wester plains*

SC271 *No good rider/Big fat woman-1/Borrow love and go*

SC272 *John Hardy-2*

SC273 *Meeting at the building/Talking, preaching-3/We shall walk through the valley*

SC274 *Fiddler's dream/Yellow gal/Green corn*

SC275 *Bring me a little water, Silvy/Julie Ann Johnson/Line 'em-3/Whoa, back Buck*

-1 Leadbetter (vcl, p); -2 unacc vocal; -3 Ledbetter (vcl, accordion)

Huddie Ledbetter (talking, g solo)

New York City — 1944

MA97 *Blind Lemon memorial record*

Huddie Ledbetter (vcl, g); Sonny Terry (hca)

MA196 *In the evening when the sun goes down*

omit Terry

New York City — 1943-44

Red river/In the pines (Black girl)/You don't miss your water

Huddie Ledbetter (talking, tap dancing)

Leadbelly's dance

Storyville Special M 616 003 (25/-)

IT IS HARDLY surprising that the term 'folk music' is in disrepute today,¹ but in social circumstances where an artist functioned naturally in this medium, work of great value has emerged from the idiom. The Negro rural south of America provided such circumstances and a singer like Huddie Ledbetter both reflected his social and physical environment and enhanced and enriched them by his imagination and skill. Of recorded singers from American Negro folk culture Ledbetter was without doubt the greatest. Among other things he was a great blues singer and no finer versions of *How long blues* and *Good morning blues* can be heard than those here. His prison songs such as *On a Monday* and *Old Riley* are great and moving music by any standard. This album, superficially not much in accord with today's jazz or blues fashions, is in fact filled with delights for anyone with an understanding of American Negro music. There are the spirituals, with Leadbelly's sometimes satirical approach, the lightweight adaptations of cowboy songs, some delightful country dance numbers and examples of authentic work songs. *Big fat woman* has stomping if inexperienced piano and some infectious scat singing. The collection includes two curios in *Leadbelly's dance*, which is certainly a rhythmic

experience, and the 'bad man' song *John Hardy*. This is sung to the tune of *John Henry* and accompanied on accordion, of all things: it is quite superb. The *Blind Lemon memorial record* features the guitar solo which Huddie called *Easy Mr. Tom* on the "Last Sessions" recordings. Indeed the only disappointing track is the title one, although Sonny Terry plays well here as he does on the three earlier items featuring him. Huddie Ledbetter's music has been out of fashion in recent years. One writer who has constantly stressed its importance has been Paul Oliver, who provides an ideal sleeve note to this very, very fine release.

EDDIE LAMBERT

SUNNY MURRAY

BIG CHIEF:

Bernard Vitet (tpt); Ronnie Beer (alt); Kenneth Terroade (ten); Alan Silva (vln); Francois Tusques (p); Beb Guerin (bs); Sunny Murray (d)

Paris — January 11, 1969

Angels and devils :: Hilarious Paris :: Now we know :: This nearly was mine

add H. LeRoy Bibbs (recitative)

same date

Straight ahead

Bibbs, Vitet, Beer, Terroade out: add Becky Friend (fl)

same date

Angel son

Pathe (F) C 062-10.096

HERE'S ANOTHER bulletin from that most original drummer, Sunny Murray, and it tells

us more about his progress as a drummer as well as bringing up several other agreeable aspects of his and other people's work. The most useful record from the point of view of Murray's drumming style remains ESP 1032, which presents the principles of his work with a clarity that hasn't been bettered yet; however, there have been some detail changes made since then. At last year's Jazz Expo he was using a larger kit than he'd been previously, and he seems to be using it here too; this has altered some of the manual relationships in his playing as well as giving him access to a wider range of tone and contrast, though it hasn't altered his approach fundamentally: the unique cymbal technique is still there, the unusual sense of proportion, the acceleration and deceleration, the unexpected climaxes, the feeling for dynamics.

Here he's surrounded by a French-American-South African team for a very successful album. He had a hand in all the material used, and his melodies are strong, his timing as good as you'd expect; in one way and another his lines and directions are of real value in shaping and controlling the performances and leading the soloists into their own avenues of expression. There's a great deal of movement going on all the time, and rarely a solo as such; it's more a question of instruments moving in and out of focus within the ensemble; a technique rather like some used in Murray's drumming.

The individual musicians are never less than adequate for their jobs, and often come across very well indeed; most outstanding beyond a doubt, is violinist Alan Silva. Silva of course used to be

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PROGRAMMES — 1969

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Dickie Wells in Paris by Paul Spinks

Eric Dolphy—Out to Lunch by Dave Mylchreest

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Oct 22nd

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Oct 29th

Duke Ellington — The Sixties by Eddie Lambert

Nov 5th

Benny Carter by Paul Spinks

Nov 12th

Bix and Bunny by Gordon Bowers

New Orleans Jazz on American Music by Mike Hazeldine

Nov 19th

THE TERRITORY BANDS by ALBERT McCARTHY

Nov 26th

NO MEETING

Dec 3rd

Free and Easy with Jazz Quiz by Mike Hazeldine

Dec 10th

Australian Jazz by Eric Brown

Famous Sessions—The Rhythmakers by Eddie Lambert

Dec 17th

XMAS PARTY

Dec 24th

NO MEETING

Dec 31st

NO MEETING

a bassist, and as such has worked before with Murray as well as with Cecil Taylor, compelling attention with his remarkable high-register playing. This change to violin, divorced from any traditional involvement with the rhythm section, has given him greater flexibility with no loss of style or technique, and his long lines, fast in terms of notes played yet essentially slow-moving, are suspended over the ensemble in a really impressive way. I suppose in view of l'affaire Jihad it might be best not to let this go without a reference to the poem by LeRoy Bibbs. I don't think there's much to upset anyone in it, indeed a lot of the time it's hard to make out what he's on about; his delivery is less than clear and the strong line that Murray hangs round him tends to drown him out anyway. There's more that could be said; it would be easy to discuss each track separately, especially *Paris son*, but space is short and anyway by now it should be obvious that it's an enjoyable and warmly recommended album. JACK COOKE

KID ORY AND JIMMIE NOONE

ALL STAR NEW ORLEANS BAND:

Mutt Carey (tpt); Kid Ory (tbn); Jimmie Noone (clt); Buster Wilson (p); Bud Scott (g); Ed Garland (bs); Zutty Singleton (d); Orson Welles (announcer)

Los Angeles — March 15, 1944

High Society

Los Angeles — March 29, 1944

Muskrat ramble

Los Angeles — April 5, 1944

That's a plenty

Los Angeles — April 12, 1944

Panama

Wade Whalley (clt) replaces Noone

Los Angeles — April 19, 1944

Jimmie's blues

Los Angeles — April 26, 1944

Sugar foot stomp

Barney Bigard (clt) replaces Whalley

Los Angeles — May 3, 1944

Savoy blues

Los Angeles — May 17, 1944

Weary blues

KID ORY AND HIS CREOLE JAZZ BAND:

Mutt Carey (tpt); Kid Ory (tbn, vcl-1); Joe Darensbourg (clt); Buster Wilson or Ed Washington (p); Bud Scott (g); Ed Garland (bs); Minor Hall or Charles Blackwell (d)



Los Angeles — fall 1944

Creole song-1 :: Blues

Mutt Carey (tpt); Kid Ory (tbn); Albert Nicholas (clt); Elzie Cooper (p); Bud Scott (g); Ed Garland (bs); Minor Hall (d)

Los Angeles — late 1946

High society

 **Jazz Panorama**  LP-8

IN THE FEBRUARY 1965 issue of this

magazine I reviewed an LP by the All Star

New Orleans Jazz Band on Mike Hazeldine's Special Release Label. Compared with that issue *E flat blues*, *Tiger rag* and *Oh! didn't he ramble* have been replaced here by two air-shots and a V-disc recording by Kid Ory's later band. Although still inevitably low-fi the recording quality is much improved and the fine playing of the rhythm section is quite audible. The tracks with Jimmie Noone are fascinating and his contributions to the ensembles are those of a master of New Orleans clarinet, providing a full, fluent, rhythmic counterpoint. The introduction to *Jimmie's blues* by Orson Welles is verbose and at times sentimental but it is by a man obviously and deeply affected by Noone's death earlier that very day. The performance is a moving experience with an integrated ensemble and some very notable trumpet from Mutt Carey. Despite his weak lip Carey was one of the most skilled leaders of New Orleans polyphony and he is heard to great advantage again on the driving version of *Sugar foot stomp*. The two Ory air shots are average in quality, the rhythm section swinging less than usual; one suspects that Minor Hall is absent here. The V-disc *High society* is a great band performance full of multi-voiced ensembles and rugged New Orleans swing. The themes and routines used throughout this album were in a few short years to

become hackneyed and tired; many collectors will feel that they have already heard them a few hundred times too often. But here they are played with freshness and spirit by men to whom this music was a natural and very real form of expression. They play it with great ease, skill and conviction and the album is a gem for any collector with an ear for the beauties of New Orleans style jazz.

EDDIE LAMBERT

ALEX WELSH

ALEX WELSH AND HIS BAND '69:

Alex Welsh (tpt); Roy Williams (tbn); Johnny Barnes (bar, alt, clt); Al Gay (ten, clt); Fred Hunt (p); Jim Douglas (g); Harvey Weston (bs); Lennie Hastings (d)

Edinburgh — March 22 and 23, 1969

June night :: She's funny that way :: One, two, button your shoe-1 :: If you were mine :: 9.20 special :: Night ferry :: I hadn't anyone 'till you :: Meditation-2 :: Topsy :: Mon homme (My man)-3 :: I'm gonna go fishin'

1-omit Welsh and Hunt; 2-omit Welsh, Barnes, Gay and Hunt; -3 Welsh and Hunt only on this track

 **Columbia SCX**  **SX** 6333 (37/5d.)

DURING THE sixties Alex Welsh's band has been one of the world's premier jazz ensembles, yet on records its output has been thin and unflattering. The *At home with . . .* LP of 1968 was perhaps their only really representative album to date. Happily this new release is even better. The weakest feature of the music here is the arrangements, those for *9.20 special* and *Topsy* in particular being commonplace and unimaginative. There are good dixieland ensembles on *If you were mine* and *I hadn't anyone*, although here too the effect is of competent routine, albeit played with conviction. The merits of this music lie mainly in its positive overall spirit and in its soloists. Outside of Harry Carney the most swinging and joyful baritone in jazz comes from Johnny Barnes, and the chunks of Barnes here are the highspot of the LP. Roy Williams is an accomplished, individual, and swinging trombonist and his solos are excellent, informed by one of the best jazz trombone tones around today. Al Gay, a vigorous and rugged tenor stylist out of Hawkins, and the perennial and delightful Fred Hunt maintain the high solo standard. The leader's forthright horn is as reliable as ever, as is the playing of the rhythm section. The bossa nova *Meditation*, the trumpet piano duet *My man* and the 6/8 *I'm gonna go fishin'* add variety to the album, although its best track is the Welsh-and-piano-less *One, two, button your shoe*. Here a simple head arrangement, an easy loping beat, and solos from Barnes (on clarinet), Williams and Gay create a jazz performance of very high quality. But *One, two* is just one of several memorable jazz performances on an album in which both music and recording quality are superb.

EDDIE LAMBERT

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LAYING BARE my soul about my days as a bebopper (see *Confessions of an Unrepentant Bebopper*) in the August 1969 issue) I mentioned various jazzmen and their recordings but it later occurred to me that the only reference to Stan Kenton was when I described the squares plodding "around the floor to *Sloppy Joe* or *Hammersmith Riff*". This wasn't just an oversight. I was never an avid Kenton fan, much preferring the music of Charlie Parker, Wardell Gray, Dizzy, Howard McGhee, Stan Getz and other bop or cool musicians. Stan the Man's excesses and pretensions left me cold. However, being keen on "modern" jazz (the term then covered most things that weren't easily identifiable as "traditional" or "swing") it was inevitable that I heard a fair amount of Kenton's music and bought quite a few of his records. Several of his main soloists — Kai Winding, Art Pepper, Vido Musso, Boots Mussulli — either had, or were beginning to build, reputations in the jazz world in general, and my own inclination was to listen to most Kenton records in the hope of catching a brief contribution from Pepper or Bob Cooper or one of the other soloists. It was a great pity that many of Kenton's musicians didn't record more with small-groups in the late-1940s. Somewhere in my remaining 78s there is still an Esquire issue of *Turmoil* and *Jumping for Jane*, which spotlighted a Pete Rugolo-directed group with Pepper, Cooper, Ray Wetzel and Eddie Bert. It didn't stand comparison with the better bebop discs released around the same time, but in retrospect is pleasant enough and certainly of value from an historical point of view. It's curious that the Kenton discs from what is now referred to as his "Formative" period only really came to my attention when they were re-issued on LP in recent years. I can't recall ever hearing any of them with the exception of *Taboo* prior to getting the LP. *Taboo* and a couple more were issued on Brunswick 78s but I never got around to buying them and neither did anyone I knew. I suppose *Peanut Vendor* was one of the first Kenton discs I became properly aware of; it's difficult to be precise because *Intermission riff*, *Eager beaver*, *Peg o' my heart* and *Lover* also blare through my mind when I cast my thoughts back twenty or so years. AFN disc-jockeys used to spin Stan's stuff every night — not all of it commercially available (*Scotch and soda* was a good, exciting Kenton which, as far as I know, didn't ever make it into the British catalogue) — and even the coy announcers on Family Favourites occasionally threw in *Capitol Punishment* as a sop to the fans or as an example of "powerhouse" jazz guaranteed to make the older listeners shake their heads in wonderment at the tastes of their sons and daughters. Is it just my imagination or were the records like this always played last and faded out before they annoyed anyone too much? Still, some of it got through because a lot of the mums and dads knew *Peanut vendor* (well my mum did, at least, but then I guess life in a two-up, two-down house with a jazz mad son is bound to have its effects) and it wasn't un-

usual to hear someone whistling *Artistry in Rhythm* at work.

Agreed they might not have been too sure just what it was, but they had heard the tune and remembered it.

Peanut vendor was — and still is, I think — an exciting record, with its screaming trumpets and turbulent (if slightly muddy) rhythm. And oddly enough although I wanted to hear Kenton's soloists I thought the original release far superior to later ones which were extended versions and let a couple of the musicians have their say. These latter discs lacked the impact and compactness of the old 78 issue. But on the whole I was listening for the soloists as Kenton's discs came into my possession. Vido Musso (ideal for the Kenton sound though basically a limited improviser) was fine on *Come back to Sorrento* — but not on the syrupy *Santa Lucia*, an obvious and weak attempt to emulate the earlier hit — and *Fantasy* had Musso and some good Boots Mussulli alto. Most of the *Riff* numbers (*Unison*, *Minor*, *Intermission* and *Bongo*) were easy-on-the-ear, if predictable, and usually gave the soloists their chance. One could also catch worthwhile snatches in the backings to vocal numbers. Vido Musso's flowing tenor on *Just a sittin' and a-rockin'* comes to mind in this respect. The Kenton disc which really did get through to me during this period was *How high the moon* and it's probably significant that it was one of the least typical Kenton sides of the late-1940s. Neal Hefti's arrangement took the band away from its usual sound and more in the direction of what was happening in Woody Herman's music. Kenton followers will of course say that this wasn't right and that their idol's style didn't need to be "watered down" to follow the approaches of other bands. It's a fair point too, but it doesn't alter the fact that *Moon* remains one of my favourite Kenton records. Eddie Bert, Art Pepper and Chico Alvarez contribute good solos and June Christy sings well, though the bop vocal bits have dated badly. If you're like me and tend to identify certain records with particular periods in your life then you'll know what I mean when I say that Kenton's *How high the moon* is of more than musical importance to me. There are better and more boppish versions of *Moon* but the opening bars of Kenton's never cease to send a thrill of anticipation through me. It's one of those records which seem to catch the mood of the late-1940s, and early 1950s.

THE "INNOVATIONS in Modern Music" tracks soon came along but before that I had been thoroughly depressed by such Kenton efforts as *Chorale for Brass*, *Piano and Bongo* and *Artistry in percussion*. True, the musicianship was superb but what did it all add up to? And there were others which also made me wonder about Kenton's intentions. *Thermopolae* struck me as just a noise and not a very pleasant one at that, and *Somnambulism* may have impressed those fans who were searching for the holy grail of significance in their jazz but there was certainly no danger of it encouraging me to walk anywhere. The sleep it brought on was a deep one. I sometimes wonder if the dictionary definition of "somnambulism" didn't



sum up the feelings of some of the musicians on such Kenton tracks as this: "a hysterical state of automatism in which acts are performed that are not remembered afterwards". I listened to *Somnambulism* again recently and chuckled at the corniness of it all. The funniest (in an unintentional way) Kenton, however, was *This is my theme*. Even my doom-laden fifteen year old soul (if you'd asked me then what "weltschmerz" was I'd have guessed at some kind of German sandwich spread, but believe you me I was full of it) couldn't take June Christy seriously as she declaimed her way through some notably inane "free verse" (or something approaching it). Charlie Barnet's 1949/50 band, which used a brassy Kenton approach in a good, swinging manner, did this kind of thing far better when Trudy Richards moped her way through *Gloomy Sunday* and *Ill wind*. Just to skip back to the Kenton disc for a moment, it comes to mind that the reverse had a similarly pretentious title — *Theme to the west* — and that it was a bit of a bore.

The Innovations orchestra had its moments. Milt Bernhart produced a lovely trombone solo on *Solitaire*, and *Cuban Episode* had plenty of fire and interest. Then there were the sides named after musicians — *Art Pepper* (and it couldn't help being worthwhile listening with a soloist like Pepper featured), *Maynard Ferguson* (a curiosity item mainly but with odd spots of reasonable jazz) and so on. The best tracks from 1950, though, were those on which the strings and other paraphernalia dropped out. *Jolly Rogers*, *Round Robin* and, to a lesser degree, *Hammersmith Riff*

(also recorded by Kenton's English admirer, Vic Lewis) for once let the Kenton musicians get their teeth into some excellent big-band jazz arrangements. Again the band veered in the direction of Woody Herman — not surprisingly really, because Shorty Rogers, who scored the three aforementioned Kenton sides, had also written for Woody — and with soloists like Pepper, Rogers and Bob Cooper featured one got a foretaste of better aspects of what became known as West Coast Jazz.

I think I began to lose interest in Kenton around the time his 1951 and early-1952 recordings became available in this country. *Mambo Rhapsody* (Geraldo or Eric Winstone could have done it just as good), the messy *Artistry in Tango* and *Francesca, Delicado* (with Laurindo Almeida playing what sounds like a souped-up guitar) and *Hot Canary* (originally popularised as a violin solo, so with Maynard Ferguson inevitably spotlighted); none of these records rose above the mediocre. Stan lacked a decent vocalist too after June Christy left, and it showed on his records. Does anyone remember *She's a comely wench* (Jerri Winters), *All about Ronnie* (Chris Connors) and *Lonesome train* (Kay Brown)? Kenton must have been looking for a popular hit about this time because in 1953 he recorded *The Creep*, the tune (quite an attractive one as it happened) which captured for posterity a dance craze of the early-1950s.

It's only fair to note that 1952/53 did see Kenton forming a top-class band which recorded a series of adventurous arrangements and spotlighted such distinctive soloists as Conte Candoli, Lee Konitz, Zoot Sims and Frank Rosolino. I was one of the fanatics (or so you'd guess from newspaper reports of the time) who flocked to Dublin in September 1953 to see and hear this Kenton organisation, but I have to admit that the soloists attracted me as much as the aura surrounding Stan the Man did. I was hooked on bop and the thought of hearing Candoli (who had played with Charlie Ventura's bop band and recorded with Chubby Jackson) and the saxophonists who'd soloed on Herman and Thornhill sides were enough to make me brave the crossing and the boredom of a Dublin Sunday. Despite the new lease of life obvious in such Kenton records as *Young blood* and *Lover man* the idea of Stan as the messiah of modern music was I suspect fast losing its appeal. Corn like *And the bull walked around, olay!* kept creeping in, but more important than that, the social background to jazz had changed and new sounds, and a new life-style for the fans, were under way. I may be wrong but I doubt that Kenton attracted all that many new fans after the middle-1950s.

WHAT REMAINS in my mind and my collection? *How high the moon* of course, and *Round Robin* and *Jolly Rogers*. The various *Riffs*, *Jump for Joe* (relaxed rhythm and first-rate Art Pepper), *Eager Beaver* and *Balboa Bash*, though both have dated and bring home just how routine a lot of Kenton's

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instrumental sides were. The obvious nostalgia raisers — *Peanut vendor*, *Come back to Sorrento*, and one or two more. The vocal tracks in which the whole band joined in — *His feet's too big for de bed*, *Mad for a pad*, *Tampico*, *And her tears flowed like wine*; these are nothing more than straightforward swing numbers but Kenton put them across well. The Latin-American things (I still think a big-band sounds good in this bag) — *Viva Prado*, *Machito* and *Journey to Brazil*. And of course the novelties (the word is used in a loose sense) — *Laura* and *September song* (both highly successful for band vocals and with some sympathetic playing by the superbly-drilled trombone and saxophone sections), *Tortillas and beans*, and *Mardi Gras*. Maybe this latter item has little or nothing to do with jazz, but it is one of the gayest discs I've heard. I'm surprised that no-one has ever thought to revive it, because it would be a natural for John Peel or a similarly inclined disc-jockey.

It's a great temptation just to list one's favourite Kenton discs and fresh titles keep coming into one's mind. Not that the records were totally good, but they often had a solo chorus or a spot of imaginative scoring which made them worth listening to. The muted trumpet on *Concerto to end all concertos*, parts of the aptly-titled *Easy go*, the trombones on *Interlude*. Shards of sound flash through my thoughts when I glance at a Kenton discography and I'm glad I at least had the opportunity to hear a great many of the records he made.

In retrospect Kenton doesn't appear to have had all that much influence on jazz developments. He provided a platform for various soloists and arrangers and did give the latter the chance to work out their musical concerns with fine musicians at hand. The more extravagant experiments have been forgotten — does anyone play the recording of Bob Graettinger's *City of Glass* these days? — and I doubt that there are many Kenton records which could be classified as essential listening for someone wanting to look back on the jazz produced between 1943 and 1953. I'll admit that it would be useful for them to spin through a handful of Kenton's discs if only in the interests of completeness. At the risk of annoying Stan's fans (and it's amazing that they still support his cause with almost religious fervour — the Pirie and Mueller *Artistry in Kenton* bio-discography is a scholarly example of this) I'll hazard a guess that, as the years roll on, Kenton will be seen more and more as having been rather like a man living on a rock in the middle of a lake. He could still get to the mainland for his supplies (the products of what was happening there) but once back on the rock he tended to live his own life. It was influenced by what he had taken from the mainland but he nevertheless set his own pace and worked out his own way of doing things. From a personal point of view I find that Kenton's total output is in some ways to jazz what James Joyce's *Ulysses* is to 20th Century literature. Scholars can spend a lifetime documenting and analysing it, the casually interested can dip into it with pleasure (they can also be bored or exasperated), and the practitioners can take some of the ideas and adapt them for their own uses. But it's extremely doubtful if the whole thing could ever be done again. The times have changed and it just wouldn't have the same impact.

Some first-class jazz, some good-humoured swing, a little corny fun, occasional flashes of insight into a blend of jazz and straight music, an imaginative use of Latin-American influences. And of course the inevitable nostalgia resulting from records which were devised to appeal to the mood of an era. Perhaps one ought to be thankful that all this can be found in Kenton's recordings from the late-1940s and early-1950s. He could have been responsible for far worse things.

SCHULLER'S 'EARLY JAZZ'* / MAX HARRISON

THOUGH ITS followers, once they reach a certain age, are fond of lamenting what a dreadful state the music is in at present, jazz has long maintained an international audience, and it is surprising, at first sight, that all this interest has resulted in so few studies which are genuinely serious. Most jazz books are content with surface description via an emotionally impressionistic terminology, and modestly seek little beyond confining our attention to whichever legends, dogmas and fallacies the author chances to prefer. We may complain, yet this miasmic body of literature probably reflects the state of jazz appreciation quite well, for though interest in such music might be wide, it is rarely deep. Progress in these matters advances like an arthritic snail, and as Ronald Atkins says, when writing of fans' "horror of musical criticism", for such people the "appeal of jazz itself is bound up with many things beside music" (1). While this attitude parallels that of the musicians themselves when faced with any but the most superficial of interviewers' questions, it is worth asking how the belief jazz cannot, and should not, be investigated properly acquired such tenacious roots. Although, as will be seen, in preparing *Early Jazz* Gunther Schuller did not really hear and analyse *all* jazz records – as the Preface implies, his insistence that we must be aware of every phase of this music properly to understand any part of it merits hearty applause. In fact, the qualities different aspects of jazz have in common are far more significant than their dissimilarities, no matter how reluctant fans are to accept this. And further, it "ought to be viewed not as the private domain of a collection of jazz aficionados, but rather in the larger context of the entire world of music". That might not be hard were it not for the partisan nature of the writing to which it normally gives rise. Instead of trying to create and stabilise an audience, jazz commentary too often seeks actively to discredit those many areas of music which an author happens not to like. Because it is essential to hear jazz as a continuous process, such writing, therefore, spreads misunderstanding and should be condemned as anti-jazz. Sound analytical criticism, by demonstrating in this music what Joachim Berendt calls "the continuity, logic, unity and inner necessity which characterise all true art" (2), resists these destructive tendencies. The kind of attack such endeavours must normally expect, then as now, however, was shown with unequivocal clarity almost a decade ago by the reception given Michael James's *Ten Modern Jazzmen* (3). As those few who bothered to read that outstanding book may recall, the author had the temerity to concentrate on musical facts, not bigotted hallucination, so the reviewers' almost unanimously contemptuous dismissals were automatic.

**The History of Jazz No. 1 Early Jazz: Its Roots and Musical Development* by Gunther Schuller. 401 pages, 127 musical examples, glossary, select discography, incomplete index, no illustrations. Oxford University Press, London. 55/-.

Yet, by an amusing inversion of perspective, the rule has an exception which occasionally favours good writing as well as bad. Just as some jazz musicians dote on the pseudo-symphonic respectability of palm court strings, many jazz pundits will eagerly endorse any book that appears to signify academic acceptance for the music. With disconcerting impartiality, this anomaly smiles alike on just and unjust: Stearns's empty, pretentious *Story of Jazz* (4) was treated as if it added to our knowledge while the extremely valuable insights of Hodeir's *Jazz – Its Evolution and Essence* (5) had something resembling the welcome they deserved. To judge by the hasty reviews which appeared earlier this year, *Early Jazz* shares that kind of luck and in the main richly deserves it.

GENERAL APPROACH

BRINGING THE music up to around 1930, this is the first of two volumes, and has seven large chapters: I Origins – divided into Rhythm, Form, Harmony, Melody, Timbre, and Improvisation, II Beginnings, III First Great Soloist, IV First Great Composer, V Virtuoso Performers of the 20s – discussing Bix, Clarinetists, Brass Players, Harlem Pianists, and Bessie Smith, VI Big Bands – dealing with New York, and Southwest, and VII Ellington Style – Its Origins and Early Development (6). If it is needful to hear the music in perspective, this book's good and bad qualities, likewise, can be understood best if readers keep in mind the conformist anthologising that constitutes most U.S. jazz writing. In contrast with, say, Wilson's *Jazz – the Transition Years* (7), which offers little beyond a cautious mosaic of others' views, GS – most of the time – is refreshingly individual. He readily praises forgotten men like Teddy Weatherford and Albert Hinton, draws attention to fine yet obscure recordings such as Charlie Johnson's *Hot-tempered blues* or George Lee's *Ruff Scufflin'*, while rejecting many received opinions. Thus he adversely comments on Armstrong's Bessie Smith accompaniments, and, while understanding the importance of, say, *Keep a song in your soul* as a step in the Henderson band's development, can hear the weaknesses of Benny Carter's early arrangements, which until now, have always been praised because, well, because they are by Carter. Yet *Early Jazz* is scarcely less uneven than the music it discusses, and, given the book's aims, this was unavoidable. Several times independent judgements give way to the usual depressing reliance on the views of others, but whereas in most jazz commentary such dependence is due to a merely superficial involvement with the subject, in GS's case it is, more honourably, because he has attempted a *history* of jazz. As he says, "the complex typography of jazz in all its vastness and myriad individualities remains mostly unexplored", and a thorough, aptly-proportioned one-man musicological survey of its history is impossible because no individual could undertake all necessary research, master all relevant

material. An adequate jazz history would need a team with subsidies of a magnitude that will not be forthcoming until the music has been long and respectably dead. All a lone writer can realistically attempt is to deal with those aspects of jazz for which he feels an engaged, subjective affinity, this being the wise procedure of Hodeir's books (8). And whatever his intentions, that is what GS has mostly done, too. For instance, while the 'virtuoso performers of the 20s' he discusses are all important, Chapter V presents an arbitrary selection from among the musicians of that decade which is perfectly acceptable as the basis for a personal view of this phase of jazz, but not for anything more objective. There is, indeed, a confusion of method as well as aim here, and although our author generally maintains the broad perspectives criticism needs, and while his selectivity ought never to be confused with the destructiveness of the anti-jazz writing mentioned above, his tendency to isolate major figures from the movements of which they are part falls short of the full coverage a true history would demand. Criticism and history in the arts, though obviously related, are separate disciplines, and when GS follows his own sympathies in the music the results, as criticism, are often so enlightening that this must be accounted the finest jazz book to come out of America, however severe one's reservations — in fact the History — and the areas on which he is less informed he either dismisses briefly in a way that ignores a historian's responsibilities, or, as noted, relies on the ideas of others. Exemplifying the former is GS's relegation of the white New York school of the '20s to a single footnote. True, such music has long been unfashionable, yet several authors (9) have shown there is much to be said about it. The second form of evasion is nowhere more apparent than in the disastrous opening chapter, which has been singled out for especial praise in so much comment on the book.

THE ORIGINS

JAZZ IS A hybrid, the result of chance meetings between African and European traditions, and its genesis can only be considered accurately in the light of *all* relevant musical factors because each must have played a part in determining how the remainder operated. GS's identifications of and conclusions about the nature, meaning and influence of the African elements which unquestionably still survive in jazz are invalid for three reasons, first being that his arguments are based on a far too restricted sampling of West African music. He is frank over his dependence here on Jones's *Studies in African Music* (10) but has not grasped that admittedly remarkable work's limitations. Actually, it deals, in great detail, with only a few pieces of music by *one* tribe, the Ewe. That some of Jones's ideas, particularly his generalisations, have been questioned by his fellow scholars does not render them worthless, of course, yet it should be enough to suggest they cannot be used as the sole basis of final conclusions. If to this we add that tribes immediately adjacent to the Ewe produce music with characteristics very different from theirs, and remember the vast terrain from which slaves were collected (11), this chapter's simplifications become apparent. Surely the truth must be that many African musical traditions contributed to jazz, and considering the variety of distinct musics found in the original slave-trading areas and the number and complexity of the problems to which they give rise, it is astonishing GS did not consult the publications of other scholars besides Jones, such as Kwabena Nketia (12), or examine recordings on the French Ocora label by Gilbert Rouget, Charles Duvelle and Colin Turnbull.

Still harder to understand is his not going to American authorities who have done field work in the US and Africa, like Harold Courlander, Alan P. Merriam and Richard A. Waterman. The last-named does appear fleetingly, but only in a misleading paraphrase by Stearns (4), which shows GS did not refer to the original text (13). This, in any case, appeared during 1952 and Waterman has done much work since modifying any conclusions therein. Such inattention is common in this chapter, a different instance being a juxtaposition of Charlie Parker with "the master drummer in a Congolese village", which casually implies the argument has a broader musicological basis than is so. The 'master drummer' concept is not exclusively West African, but the Congo is, again, an enormous area with many distinct kinds of music in a goodly proportion of which a master drummer has no place. An example is the music of the Ituri Forest Pygmies.

A second disqualification is that GS does not even attempt to place in perspective with jazz the vast quantity of American Negro music which though possessing identities of its own is still related to it. (The Atlantic *Southern Folk Heritage* LPs (14) give an impression of the scope and variety of this music, but for a fuller idea of what material ought to have been covered here see Paul Oliver's entries on 'Field Calls and Hollers', 'Gospel Songs and Spirituals', etc. in *Jazz on Record* (15).) Consequent upon this omission is Chapter V's offering a view of blues history discredited about 20 years ago. This sees country blues as simpler than, and as merely leading to, the so-called classic singers, and presents Bessie Smith as the tradition's virtual end. A hint of the author's casual acquaintance with even this latter group of Artists is his claim that Clara Smith made only twelve recordings, whereas 122 titles under her own name have been traced (16). Finally, the third basic weakness in this consideration of jazz origins is that the European half of the synthesis is constantly underplayed, this being as unrealistic as minimising the African contribution. Bypassing most of the relevant material, Chapter I abounds in false parallels between jazz and Jones's Ewe sampling. These, in any case, follow a tendency that goes back at least to Borneman (17) in that they depend on emphasising similarities and ignoring differences. Further, because music does not sound European we cannot automatically assume it African. Thus Lonnie and Ed Young's *Oree, Jim and John* or *Chevrolet*, played on cane fife and drums (18), for all the sleeve note's talk of "African riffs", resemble no known African music and are possibly a degeneration of European military drum and fife pieces. GS's section on harmony explains that, contrary to popular supposition, 3rds, 4ths, 5ths and octaves are found in (some) West African music, and this might seem to provide a link, for pre-jazz American Negroes, with traditional European harmony and its triadic principle of 3rds. But, as he acknowledges, each tribe uses exclusively one of these intervals only, and the resultant organum, while offering an incidental parallel with 9th- to 13th century European music, represents an entirely different sort of harmonic consciousness from that of functional tonality in even its most elementary (e.g. hymn tune) manifestations. One might as well suggest the parallelism of, say, Debussy's *Cathedrale engloutie* derives from Africa. Again, jazz musicians' trading fours has a very coincidental relation to what "the African drummer achieves within his shifting *polymetric* structures" (my italics) as instanced by GS; and the chorus in African music is quite different from the jazz chorus as the latter results from the cadential impulse of traditional harmony, a tendency nowhere paralleled in the pieces detailed by Jones. Similarly, it is going much too far to say "the correlation between pitch and word content was preserved in a

fairly unadulterated form in the blues", and GS's parallel between 'shifts of centre' in African speech and the blues moving from chord to chord is false. These shifts are among a number of factors affecting word meanings — alter one and you change the significance of the rest, and this is quite different from the simple alternation of primary triads in blues harmony. As the author elsewhere acknowledges, in blues "form was determined by harmonic function" — a very European state of affairs. Still with form, he too readily assumes Scott Joplin did not have European procedures in mind with his rags. This composer had a fair education at George Smith College (19) and would not have been unaware of simple forms like the rondo — a point indirectly confirmed by his later attempts at opera (20). Nor is the tendency of melodies to oscillate round a fixed note specifically African: as a random instance consider *Ego Oedipus* from the *Oedipus Rex* of Stravinsky, who is here echoing a feature of Russian folksong. Likewise, GS is wrong to say bop's subdivision of the beat has no parallel in Europe. Is not Boulez more complex than Schoenberg who is more complex than Wagner? And is not part of that complexity faster tempos and smaller rhythmic subdivisions? This practice of distorting the European end of the spectrum is inexplicable in view of the author's position as a composer, instrumentalist, conductor, his work at the New England Conservatory, at Tanglewood, etc., but arising from these false parallels between jazz and Ewe music are a variety of unconvincing arguments. For example, does all jazz swing? And equally? GS seems to think so on page 7, yet on 237 correctly cites the Smith/Armstrong *St. Louis blues* to show "that jazz need not swing in order to be jazz". If European music does not swing because it is not "socially functioning" why did it not swing earlier when it was? And why don't dance bands, which still are? Swing gives GS as much trouble as anyone else who bothers with this misleading concept. His suggestion jazz syncopating arose from a monolinear simplification of African polyrhythm is interesting, but can we speak of the *African* heritage in jazz rhythm if its *jazz* character depends on its "debilitation" (GS's term) by European influences? As he says (some) African music is rhythmically the world's most complex, yet how can jazz be so African as he maintains if it is as much a simplification of African survivals as of European borrowings? As acknowledged above, there is no questioning the continued existence of African elements in jazz, but they come from more varied sources, and are synthesised with European factors in more complex ways than this book cares to admit. Arising from this virtually simplistic approach, the author's 'conversion' of a brief snatch of music from a Ewe ensemble to jazz band instrumentation is not, and cannot be, accurate or meaningful. When music is altered so much as this its content changes. An art's technique and expression are inseparable, what you say being partly how you say it: Yeats's "How can we know the dancer from the dance?" is still a good question. If the Negro held so firmly to his melodic heritage as maintained here, how could he adapt it so readily to European harmony and rhythm? Was it so ineluctably African if it could be fitted to them? Alternatively, was it really the same once it had been?

Everything is so inconclusive here, and while cynics might say that is the tradition of jazz histories, none of the numerous questions on links between Jazz and African musics is answered. For instance, *why* was there no harmony in American Negro music before the Civil War? Who says so? What is the "available evidence" mentioned but not detailed on page 35? The section headed 'Improvisations', besides containing mistakes such as "the multi-linearity of early jazz was abandoned until the late

'50s" (ever heard Parker with Roach?), evades the problems of improvisation for the simpler task of refuting Borneman's theories (21). And, as noted, countless European influences are ignored. As a random example, what about the instruments' role? True, jazzmen found new ways of playing them, yet they were formed in and for European music and are bound to have had their effect on what began as alien ways of thought. Regarding American simplification of African rhythmic procedures, it would have been interesting to have GS's reactions to Gottschalk, who attempted a similar kind of thing much earlier, especially in view of the comments by Blesh, Janis (19) and Martin Williams (22). This might have been related to the simplification of commercial ragtime — e.g. Mike Bernard (19) — and, arising from this, the question of 20th-century popular music as a dilution of jazz. Are jazz and pop different stages in the transformation of the same African and European resources?

THE BEGINNINGS

WHILE THE above chapter is on a much lower level than the rest of the book, or of anything else GS has ever published, one's protest over untested assumptions must continue into Chapter II. For instance, evidence is lacking to show the earliest jazz was so bad as he says, and the fact Negroes undoubtedly then played other music besides jazz (23) does not alter this. Often he appears unaware of the background to items discussed — such as that *Ory's Creole trombone* is really a Clarence Wylie two-step cakewalk named *Car-barlick acid* (22) — but more important are such questions as why, if earlier jazz was so poor, such diverse later groups as Oliver's Creole Band and the ODJB were so consistent in style and method. They made mistakes, to be sure, like the slide whistle on *Sobbin' blues* and the silly riffing of *Tiger rag*, yet, however much we credit to individual excellence, their music argues a tradition with solid achievements behind it. Indeed, the book's whole attitude to New Orleans is faulty, one reason being that GS has missed the significance of the American Music recordings from the '40s, which proved that, after the all-too-famous exodus of players north and west, jazz continued developing in that city, rather than remaining fixed in one immutable style that belongs in a single early chapter of the music's history. Consequently he misunderstands Sam Morgan's records, which are not a "marvellous anachronism" but, as Bruce King has shown (24), relate most interestingly to earlier and later New Orleans jazz. GS's dependence on others' views when dealing with music with which he has not familiarised himself is again clear in his quotation of Samuel Charters to the effect that Morgan's "are the only recordings of a first-rate (New Orleans) band playing anywhere near its prime" made during the '20s (25). The relevant material has simply not been mastered, and for an indication of what music ought to have been considered here see Albert McCarthy's entry 'The Tradition — New Orleans' and other related pieces in *Jazz on Record* (15). GS rightly calls Oliver's music a "highly disciplined, very personal and strict interpretation of what the New Orleans style meant to him", and this should have led to an awareness of the potential for further change within that style which was realised elsewhere later. However, it is with Oliver's Creole Band that the author's real stature as a jazz critic at last, and abruptly, emerges. He admirably supplements the Williams monograph (26) and offers so many insights that summary is impossible. Typical, though, of the sort of comment anyone wishing to listen to jazz properly must welcome are his remarks

on that passage in *Chimes blues* where the band insists on F minor (except Lil Hardin, who thinks it's F major!) but Louis, correctly, moves to F-sharp diminished.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG

CHAPTER III follows its predecessor's lead in abandoning theorising on inadequate evidence in favour of solid musicology. GS is always at his best when evaluating a definite body of recordings, a finite object, as it were, rather than grappling with longer perspectives — though, as we shall see on reaching the large bands, there are exceptions when it is a question of compositional or arranging techniques. This excellently supplements Hodeir's (5) and Hadlock's (9) work on Armstrong, but while going into greater detail and covering more ground is disturbingly perfunctory at the end. It is no adverse comment, however, to say many points here could be disputed, for one learns as much from a real critic when disagreeing as when concurring with him. Certainly GS's assessment of the Hot Seven might be questioned in detail and his verdicts on the "inept" *Squeeze me* and "saccharine sentimentalism" of *Tight like this* seems incomprehensible. Surely it is mistaken also to speak of many later Sevens as merely flashy for these include successful attempts by trumpeter and pianist to expand the language of jazz. And Hines was not the first colleague of Armstrong's "who understood him and was almost his equal". What of Bessie Smith and Bechet? Hines was the *last* — an arresting thought. GS's comments, both here and in the previous chapter, on the shift from thematic to chordal improvisation are almost welcome because for over 20 years it has been maintained, wrongly, that this was a bop innovation. He is penetrating on the early growth of Armstrong's style and in tracing the characteristic germinal ideas which, from *Mabel's dream* to *West end blues*, are used with steadily increasing cogency. The balance of unity and variety in *Big butter and egg man*, *Hotter than that* and other solos is lucidly demonstrated, and there is a remarkable analysis of the *West End* trumpet part, the latter greatly preferable to the exaggerated comments on this track which open the chapter. There is a wonderful account of the *Skip the gutter* piano/trumpet exchanges and his analysis of *Weatherbird* is one of the finest passages in the book. A reader would need to be moronically unresponsive for his enjoyment not to be intensified by writing like this. And it is good to see Alex Hill receive credit for the *Beau*

Lecture Course

THE HORSHAM branch of the Workers' Educational Association is presenting a twenty week course on "Music, Labels and Categories: An Examination of Certain Aspects of Afro-American and European Musics in the Twentieth Century". The speaker will be Howard Riley and the course will be held at The High School for Girls, Worthing Road Horsham, beginning on October 14th and thereafter on successive Tuesday evenings commencing at 8 p.m. The fee for the course is 40/- and further details may be obtained from Mrs. Pamela Taylor Hon. Branch Secretary, W.E.A., 99 Cootes Avenue, Horsham, Sussex (Tel: Horsham 5960).

London Jazz Centre Society

THE LONDON Jazz Centre Society present their first concert of the winter season on Thursday, October 16th at 7.30 p.m. It will be held at the London School of Economics and will include the premier of a new work by Stan Tracey, to be performed by his big band. Further information may be obtained from the London Jazz Centre, 5 Egmont House, 116 Shaftesbury Avenue, London, W.1.

koo Jack arrangement which gave rise to one of the best of all Armstrong's recorded solos. His response to the care with which this track was obviously prepared and to the score's simple yet telling formal virtues parallels the exceptional performances / *wonder* and *Jodie man* drew from him many years later. Just because he so often has recorded with hopelessly unimaginative accompaniments do we minimise the effect his surroundings have on this great musician? As GS writes, "Armstrong's capacities . . . ought to lay to rest the strange notion held by many jazz musicians and jazz buffs that structural logic, a conscious sense of variation and development, is an intellectual preoccupation incompatible with true jazz creativity."

Superb recordings can be found almost throughout Armstrong's career, and he developed continuously at least up to the 1930 *Sweethearts on parade*. To dismiss later work as "the elimination of all but sure-fire formulae" is amazingly insensitive, and suggests GS's listening, outside the period prescribed by this chapter, has been cursory. So facile a verdict is demolished by, for example, the distillation of earlier complexity found in the finest of Armstrong's 1935-41 Deccas, which has few parallels because hardly any jazzmen evade the trap of self-imitation for so long.

MORTON'S ROLE

MANY SECTIONS of the Morton chapter are splendid, GS's comments on the changes he effected being highly instructive, and in this light his claim to have invented jazz seems less silly than usual. He didn't of course, but we are led to see how vital his contributions were. The account of Morton's 1926 *Peppers* is brilliant, and though one regrets other early piano solos were not here related to them, the analysis of *New Orleans joys* with its attempt "to bifurcate the music into separate tempo levels", shows how advanced he was. GS's dismissal of later orchestral items is too facile because the further developments several of them, like *Burning the iceberg* and *New Orlenias bump*, are moving towards were, after all, frustrated by circumstances, not lack of ability. And far from their marking a mere compromise with then-current trends, his Gennet *Mr Jelly Lord*, with its disciplined brass and reed sections, appears, in 1926, to anticipate the big band movement independently of Henderson. As in the Armstrong chapter, GS seems unwilling to credit anyone — except Ellington — with more than one achievement, and judges later endeavours by the not always appropriate standards of the earlier. Arising from this, he fails to relate his analytical findings, revealing though they usually are, to any overall concept of the growth of the jazz musical language. This is surprising, for as he rightly says, "A true assessment of an artist (or a particular musical development) cannot be made without reference to the totality of his work and its relation to his contemporaries. An *analysis* of Beethoven's *Eroica* or Armstrong's *West end blues* without reference to musical history or the development of musical style could yield a certain amount of factual information, but a full evaluation would be impossible without considering the authors' total *oeuvre* and that of their immediate predecessors, contemporaries, and successors".

VIRTUOSOS AND OTHERS

PERHAPS THE absence of an underlying, and unifying, thesis is due to *Early Jazz* being overlong in preparation — indeed the Preface refers to "a period of far too many years". One's impression GS studied separately and in isolation each body of records his chapters required seems confir-

med by various contradictions. Thus in page 144 we find "James P. Johnson, who was certainly one of the more advanced ragtime pianists, *always* retained the original 2/4 feeling, a rhythmic tightness that Morton loosened up and smoothed out early in his career' (my italics), while from page 216 we learn, "Johnson's greatest contribution was to recast the rhythms of ragtime into a more swinging, steadier beat", and on 218, "*Keep off the grass* and *Carolina shout* are full of ternary patterns superimposed on the basic 4/4 beat". Surely the first statement was written before, and the others following, a proper study of Johnson's records? Again, on page 291, reading of Druie Bess's trombone playing with Jess Stone, we gather it has "a style and technical fluency that only Snub Mosely and Miff Mole had attained by 1927", whereas, in discussing Henderson's 1926 *When spring comes peeping through*, page 263 says Benny Morton's "lithe, modern swinging style and formidable techniques were years ahead of other players". Similarly an untenable cliché about the geographical distribution of jazz on page 149 is forcefully corrected in the section on large bands.

No doubt because it relates so well to GS's compositional affinity, we get the best assessment thus far of James P.'s contribution, bringing to life an excellent comment of Dick Wellstood's: Johnson "is the focal point. The rags, cottillions, and all those other unknown phenomena came together in James P., who made jazz out of them; and then the harmonies went into Duke, the showiness into Tatum, the goodtimeness into Fats, and the rhythmic potentialities into Monk . . . And Basie stole the skeleton" (27). Highly sympathetic, too, is the account of Waller, GS echoing Hadlock's "To his day there hangs over his recorded work the uneasy air of unfulfilled promise." (9). Outstanding again is this book's identification of Bessie Smith's essential qualities, though Sargeant (28) remains necessary reading.

Being able to pass from Bessie Smith to the ODJB within this chapter gives an idea of the author's range, and his comments on the latter are astute. In particular he is to be thanked for showing the band must be heard in context with its (always inferior) imitators (29). Regarding these latter, on pages 183 and 251 he confuses two different groups, the New Orleans Jazz Band, who did not record until 1924 and were not direct ODJB copyists, and the Original New Orleans Jazz Band, who recorded during 1918-19 and were (30). GS's appraisal of Noone, is again, simply the best to have appeared so far, and if his account of Bix, perceptive so far as it goes, is less good than Hadlock's (9), it is pleasant to see Johnny Dunn getting some credit at last. As much could be said of his comments on Jabbo Smith, though one might protest, chauvinistically, that the author, whose orientation is naturally American, seems almost to regard this trumpeter as his personal discovery. Smith's records, like the Louisiana Sugar Babes' or Armstrong's with Tate, are not "little known" or "neglected", but have been familiar listening to European collectors for 25 or 30 years. Similarly he describes various items, such as Ellington's *Immigration blues* or the Vocalion *East St. Louis toodle-oo*, as extremely rare which have long been obtainable here on LP. This does not diminish the quality of GS's comments, of course, and he is especially good on Smith's Rhythm Aces. Still, the trumpeter's affinity with Red Allen (*Sleepy time blues*) could have been mentioned, his earlier playing with Charlie Johnson (*Paradise wobble*, *Charleston's the best dance*) dismissed less readily, and something said about the aspect of his work represented on Ellington's *What can a poor fellow do?* (And comparing Smith to B.T. Wingfield on the Pickett-Parham Apollo Syncopators' 1926 *Mojo strut* leads one to wonder who influenced whom.) While it is misleading to suggest Johnny

Dodds's recordings were made "over a lifetime", for the vast majority date from 1923-29, comment on this musician, yet again, reaches a higher level than anything we have seen before, and one is particularly struck by the remark that (aside from Revival copyists) his innovations went unused by his successors. Of how many great figures in this music is that true! The essentials of Bechet's enormous, and uninfluential, contribution are acutely examined, too — although his first records were not made in 1923, as stated here, but in '21, for English Columbia (22). Among many striking incidentals is one concerning Franz Schoepp, whose clarinet pupils included Noone, Goodman and Bailey. Considering the virtuosity of these men and the uses to which they put it, one suspects such background figures might have exerted influences which even the most diligent student can miss.

LARGE BAND — (1) NEW YORK

AS HINTED above, this section and the one following are excellent on the spread of jazz after 1920 and on how grossly this question has been simplified. Especially welcome, too, is comment on Jim Europe and his rivals as antecedents both of big band and 'symphonic' jazz. Here is the sort of background material a history ought to provide — though Europe's recordings were made in New York, not Paris as stated here. The account of Henderson's, that is Don Redman's, achievement is — again the phrase must be used — easily the best thus far. Here, as with Ellington, GS's precise, musicianly understanding contrasts refreshingly with the sentimental enthusiasms and ritualistic affirmations of empty slogans which usually pass for criticism on this area of the music. For example, this sentence regarding syncopation can aid our response to jazz right up to Charlie Parker and beyond: "Once the player could detach himself from explicitly stating the four beats and thus get 'inside' the beat a vast field of rhythmic emancipation lay ahead". Henderson's output is very hard to deal with because of its extraordinary variability, and there is no doubt it lost much through Redman's departure, as the two versions of *Hop off* show. But is good to see a denial of Ellington's having scored *St. Louis shuffle*, a most improbable legend, and I quite agree *Variety stomp* and *St Louis blues* are stock arrangements, certainly not Redman's work. Welcome, too, are GS's comments on the rhythmic innovations (within the orchestral field) of *Tozo*, *Whiteman stomp*, etc., (whose 3/8 and 3/4 over 4/4 are most interestingly echoed by Lloyd Hunter's *Sensational mood*), and there is an analysis of *Copenhagen* so helpful as to rank with that of *Weatherbird*. He is mistaken in saying, on page 255, that *Copenhagen* was influenced by the California Ramblers' version as the latter was recorded only seven days before Henderson's. The Wolverines' performance of five months earlier appears to be the real source of inspiration, and that this had a widespread effect is acknowledged by the author on page 193 and confirmed by the Sammy Stewart and Arkansas Travellers readings.

LARGE BANDS — (2) THE SOUTHWEST

IF GS's treatment of the still virtually unknown southwestern bands is again in a class by itself this is less surprising in that he has the field almost to himself, as with the exception of Albert McCarthy's 'Territory Bands' entry in *Jazz on Record* (15), only biographical information has so far been published on these ensembles. This chapter is penetrating on such groups as Jesse Stone's Blues Serenaders, which, featuring Albert Hinton's remarkably free trumpet playing,

achieved an intense expression of the tragic spirit of the blues within, relatively speaking, sophisticated, complex scores. That expression was heightened by Stone's arrangements providing — as in the arresting three-part polyphony of *Starvation blues* — a formal tension jazz so often lacks, and this comment should be linked to what was said above on Armstrong's *Beau koo Jack*. Also discussed with great understanding are bands like Walter Page's Blue Devils, and the ensembles of Grant Moore, Troy Floyd and especially Alphonso Trent (31). There is confusion here over the dates and order of the last-named's recordings (32), however, and it should have been noted that *Nightmare* was lifted from the version by Elgar's Creole Orchestra of two years before. Until now Bennie Moten has occupied a footnote of jazz 'history' as a dim musical ancestor of Basie, but here at last his band's development is traced from the dire beginnings of *Elephant wobble* to the superb 1932 items. Always GS isolates the significant points with a fine ear and — now that we are dealing with composition and arranging — an excellent sense of historical perspective. As these 1932 pieces, Moten's last records, are still neglected, I might say listening to them over the years has, perhaps unfairly in view of the extramusical factors involved, left me ever more critical of Basie. It is not worth taking time to abuse the band he has led during the '50s and '60s — though Moten's final work reminds us how heartily it should be abused. On his 1937-39 Deccas Basie had one of the greatest ensembles in all jazz — yet for how short a time! Moten's *Lafayette*, *Prince of wails*, *Toby*, etc., are products of a timeless craftsmanship, whereas all too soon

in Basie's hands the riffs began to sound mass-produced. For one listener at least, even so early as the *Vocalion Taxi war dance* and *12th Street rag* the contrast between Lester Young's magnificent tenor playing and the mechanistic accents of the ensemble is already too marked.

ELLINGTONIAN ORIGINS

THE ELLINGTON section ranks with that on the southwest as this book's most original, and for the same reason. Despite his long-standing international reputation, little, aside from scattered pieces by Andre Hodeir (5), Vic Bellerby (33), A.J. Bishop (34) and Burnett James (9), has appeared that even begins to explain what he has done. GS's consideration represents an enormous advance, to which all later writers on Ellington and other jazz composers will be indebted. Not only are the important records located, but their most telling features relative to the emergence of his compositional method are identified. And, as all good music looks both forward and backwards, the author shows how, say, *Birmingham breakdown* relates both to ragtime and to *Creole rhapsody*, how the unusual chord sequence of *Awful sad* and two of its breaks — one on a whole-tone pattern, the other virtually atonal — anticipate the bitonality of *Koko*, *Dusk* etc. The musicianly insights come thick and fast here, typical being his observations on the Victor *Jubilee stomp*, which unlike the previous versions has a properly controlled beat and much improved ensembles. And how right he is about the superiority of the Victor *Creole rhapsody*, despite 'critical' opinion stolidly

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- (37) Garvin Bushell: 'Jazz in the '20s' in *Jazz Panorama* ed. Williams (Jazz Book Club, 1965)

favouring the earlier, badly played, poorly shaped Brunswick. Uncelebrated gems such as Nanton's *Harlem flat blues* solo or the sax ensembles of *Hot feet* are not missed either, though I think it questionable whether the trombonist's expressive range was greater than Miley's. (Incidentally, does GS know Alan Stott's unique essay on Nanton? (35).) And while the assertion "contrapuntal thinking has always been foreign to" Ellington seems reasonable how about *Harlem airshaft*, the remarkable combination of themes at the close of *Hot and bothered* (better played on the later Pathe than on the familiar Okeh version), or the equal-voiced duet between Kay Davis and the band prior to the final piano cadenza of *Transblucency*?

Little question remains, I think, that Ellington's original intentions were commercial, as were those of the Washington bands among which he grew up, and his admission it was Miley who made him "forget all about the sweet music" is revealing. A formative influence GS does not make enough of, however, is the stride pianists. Their impact on his pianism is obvious, but these men also were concerned with absorbing new technical resources, with individuality of expression, and this, I believe, permanently affected Ellington's musical attitudes (36). An interesting parallel, too, is that between the influences on Ellington and those on his sidemen, which are numerous and remind us about the greatest men being the most indebted. Oliver's effect on Miley (37) (rather than Johnny Dunn's, as the author suggests when discussing the latter) seems to me crucial — and altogether Oliver's influence on '20s jazz is a neglected subject. The Creole Band is echoed again in the trumpet duet of *If you can't hold the man you love* and in *The creeper*. And, far from presenting us "for the first time . . . with Ellington the composer", *Rainy nights* was lifted from Henderson's (Redman's) *Naughty man*, Miley following Armstrong's solo quite closely at first. Again, GS is probably correct in saying passages such as the parallel 9ths of *Tishomingo blues* were taken from then-fashionable pianists like Zez Confrey, but might they not equally derive from, say, the parallel 7ths of *Froggie Moore* notated on page 85? The fact one could go on raising points like this without end indicates the cogent detail in which this music is illuminated. Better to end with GS's celebration of the underrated *Old man blues* of 1930, for despite the unforgettable character of, say, *Black and tan fantasy*, this, I think, is the first of Ellington's great classics — perfectly consistent in all its parts and a true collective creation that balances composing and improvisation in a way only Morton had previously achieved.

CONCLUSION

PRAISE AND blame have been mixed in unusually strong proportions in the above paragraphs, but GS's enthusiasm for the music and respect for those who play it are apparent on his every page. Leaving aside the first, and to a considerable extent the second, chapter, this book has much of crucial importance to tell us, and something may be learnt even from its omissions. We have reached the stage with jazz of just about knowing enough to realise how little we know, and if we cannot see clearly we should at least try to see clearly what the obscurities are. In both its positive and negative aspects this book helps. It should not be imagined I have noted various errors, omissions and contradictions to score off the author. Far from it. One hopes the publishers will be responsible enough to keep his book available over a number of years and that there will be revised editions, including a paperback. Chapter I should be omitted from any future printing and Chapter II rewritten, but the other mistakes can easily be put right. No apology is made for

the length of this notice, or for the delay in its appearance, because *Early Jazz* demands much time of reader and reviewer alike, and usually pays back generously in proportion to the effort expended. Over the past few months I have read it straight through twice and returned to many passages several times more. During this I accumulated 20 foolscap pages of notes, besides consulting many other books and periodicals and discussing a variety of points with such people as Paul Oliver and Albert McCarthy (without whose aid my comments on African music and on discographical questions would carry far less weight). Above all I have been led to rehear scores of records, usually with sharpened ears. It has, in short, been a thoroughly stimulating experience. In view of their normal futility, 55/- may seem an inflated price for a jazz book, yet if you learn half as much from *Early Jazz* by Gunther Schuller as I did, you should consider the money well spent.

COMING EVENTS

Jazz Expo '69

The programme for Jazz Expo '69 is as follows:-
Saturday, October 25. 6.15 and 9.0 p.m. Sarah Vaughan and her Trio, Maynard Ferguson and his Big Band. Sunday October 26. 6.0 and 8.45 p.m. "Vibes Workshop" with Lionel Hampton, Red Norvo and Gary Burton Quartet, Kenny Clarke-Francy Boland Big Band, Salena Jones. Monday, October 27. 8.0 p.m. "Guitar Workshop" with Barney Kessel, Tal Farlow, Grant Green, etc. Newport All-Stars featuring Ruby Braff, Red Norvo, etc., Dakota Staton. Tuesday, October 28. 8.0 p.m. "Jazz From A Swinging Era", Part 1 with Louis Jordan and the Tympany Five, Alex Welsh and his Band, Bill Coleman, Albert Nicholas. Wednesday, October 29. 8.0 p.m. "Jazz from a Swinging Era", Part 2 with Lionel Hampton and his Band, Teddy Wilson, Ben Webster, Humphrey Lyttelton and his Band, Dave Shepherd Quintet, Elkie Brooks. Thursday, October 30. 6.45 and 9.10 p.m. "American Folk Blues and Gospel Festival '69" with Albert King and his Blues Band, Otis Spann, John Lee Hooker, Champion Jack Dupree, Robert Patterson Singers, Stars of Faith. Friday, October 31. 6.45 and 9.10 p.m. Thelonious Monk Quartet, Cecil Taylor Quartet, Cleo Laine. Saturday, November 1. 6.45 and 9.10 p.m. Miles Davis Quintet, Mary Lou Williams Trio, Jon Hendricks.

Note: The concert on October 25th will be at the Royal Festival Hall, all others at the Odeon, Hammersmith.

American Folk Blues Festival '69

THE FAMOUS Lippmann and Rau group will only play one date in this country, on Friday October 3rd at the Royal Albert Hall, London. Those taking part will be Magic Sam and the Blues Band, Juke Boy Bonner, Alex 'Whistlin' Moore, Clifton and Cleveland Chenier, Little John Jackson and Earl Hooker.

Teddy Wilson Tour

TEDDY WILSON is making a return tour in company with the Dave Shepherd Quintet, dates already finalised including:- October 25-28. Carlisle, Coach House Club; 29 Jazz Expo '69; 30 Bristol, Old Granary Club; 31 Newcastle, Connaught Hall; November 1 Manchester, Sports Guild; 3-4 Dublin, Slattery's; 5 London, Jazzshows; 6 London, B.B.C. T.V.; 7 Coventry, Belgrade Theatre; 8 York, Arts Centre; 9 Basildon, Arts Centre

Albion Modern Jazz Club

THIS CLUB meets at the King's Head, Fulham Broadway (Buses 11, 14, 28, 91 and 295 run to Fulham Broadway). Club membership is 2/6d. and entrance is 4/-. The club exists to provide a venue for some of the experimental British jazz artists.

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